This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

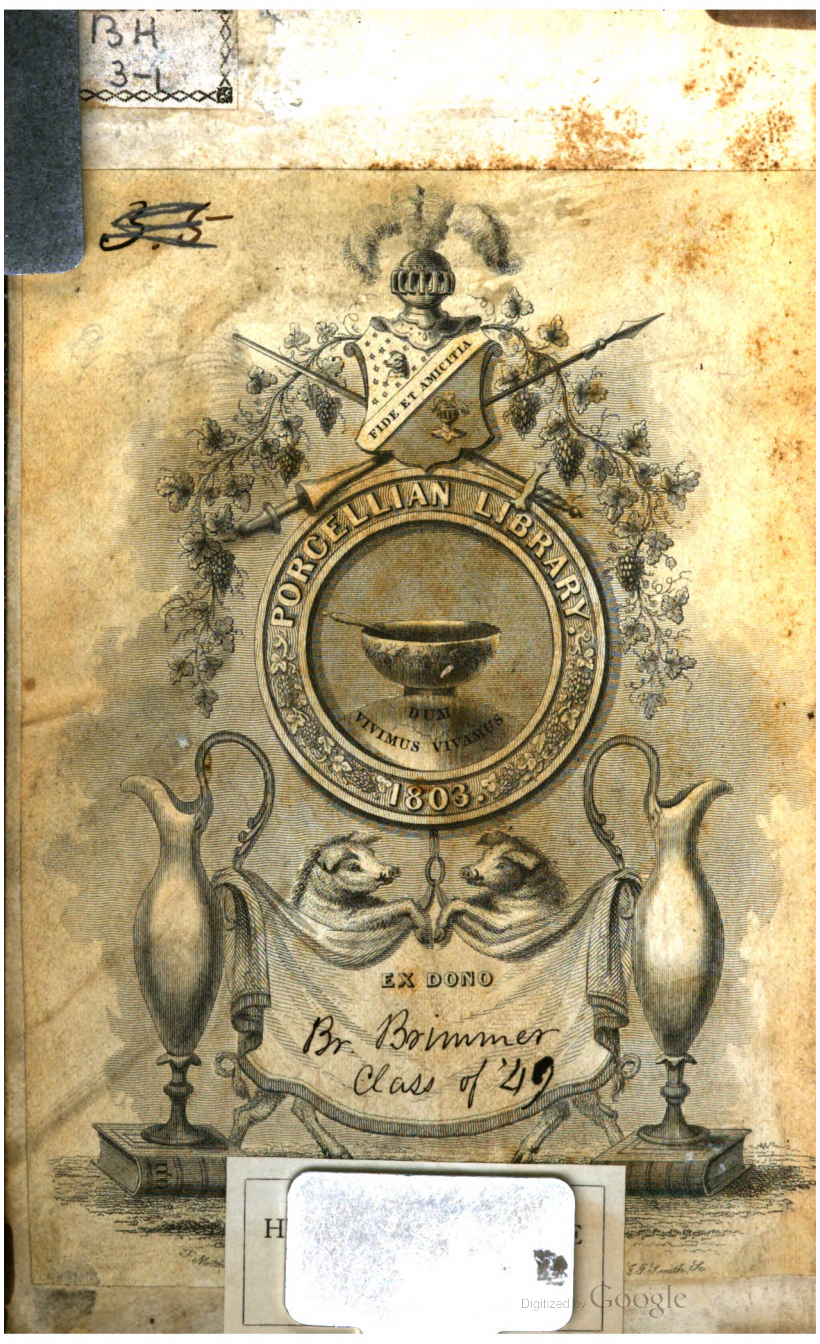
+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

Digitized by Google

BH
3-1



Digitized by Google

W. Brimmer
to the Proc.-Club.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Scott, Caroline Lucy.

Digitized by Google

TREVELYAN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"A MARRIAGE IN HIGH LIFE."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME I.

PHILADELPHIA:
CAREY, LEA & BLANCHARD.

1834.

Digitized by Google

22X62.38

HARVARD COLLEGE
SEP 6 1917
LIBRARY

Porcellian Club.

Digitized by Google

TREVELYAN.

CHAPTER I.

Slight withal may be the things which bring
Back on the heart the weight which it would fling
Aside for ever. It may be a sound,
A tone of music—summer's eve or spring—
A flower—the wind—the ocean, which shall wound,
Striking electric chain by which we're darkly bound.

BYRON.

IT is needless to attempt any description of Richmond. Every one must be acquainted with that celebrated resort of Sunday cockneys, that long established colony of old maids and widows. Every one has skimmed along the lovely silver Thames which glides below the town, or has wandered in the meadows on its banks, listening to the distant chimes of the Twickenham bells, and watching in pleasing reverie the reflections of the gay pleasure-boats, as they swim past, or rest under the welcome shade of the drooping willows. Every one, in short, has felt the soothing influence of

"That landscape, which to the heart inspires
Vernal delight and joy—able to drive
All sadness but despair."

In one of the houses at the outskirts of the town, situated between the bridge and the meadows, whose little gardens overhang the barge track at the edge of the river, lived in 1798 Miss Trevelyan. She was one of that description of stigmatized persons yclept old maids, mentioned as congregating to the place; that is to say, she

Digitized by Google

was several years above forty, and had apparently no thoughts of changing her state of single blessedness. But in other respects she was a most unworthy member of the then existing community of Richmond; for she never played at cards, never gave or went to dinner-parties, never made or received visits. Once, indeed, a carriage, with the decoration of a coronet on the panels, and a smart turn-out of four knowing-looking horses, was seen waiting at her door, and great was the sensation it occasioned, and many the surmises to which it gave rise. But to whom it belonged was not ascertained, for her servants, the usual medium of information on such matters, and who consisted of a cross old cook and a deaf fat footman, were as reserved and exclusive as herself, and associated with no one.

On the first arrival of Miss Trevelyan at Richmond, several advances of civility had been made towards her, but they had met with no return on her part. Some settled that she was *fine*, others that she was *serious;* but all agreed she was *queer*. By degrees, however, as new topics of conversation arose and new inhabitants arrived, she ceased in some degree to be the general subject of discussion, although whenever she was seen wandering in the meadows with her dog (her only and constant companion,) many an invective was levelled against her on account of her supposed impertinent airs, or puritanical pride, and for so provokingly occupying a house which might have added a member or two to the society of the place, perhaps even of the male sex, an article in which Richmond was at that time sadly deficient.

One fine evening in the beginning of August, Miss Trevelyan had taken her station on a bench in her little garden, under a catalpa-tree in full blossom. It was one of those delicious evenings which follow an intensely hot day, and when mere existence is enjoyment; she sat for some time in the vague sort of reverie which that sensation produces. The soft air was perfumed with jasmine and honeysuckles; the summer flies buzzed around, and all nature seemed in life. On a sudden the sound of music struck her ear. She looked over the low parapet wall

Digitized by Google

of her little garden and beheld one of those aquatic shows which seem rather to belong to bright Venice, with her songs, her splashing oars, and gay romance of life, than to the cold, dull climate and habits of England. Two or three gilt barges, decorated with flags of every colour, and followed by an innumerable train of boats, came sparkling down the stream, while figures, decked in all the tints of the rainbow, were seen dancing gaily on the decks. The music grew more distinct and loud at each stroke of the rowers, and now the dazzling flotilla passed close below Miss Trevelyan's garden; then, gliding gently on pursued its gay career through the arches of the bridge, which soon concealed it from the sight, while the notes of the various instruments, the splashing of the many oars, and the merry voices of the collected crowd, again grew gradually fainter on the ear.

The sun had now sunk below the horizon, and the trees, outlined against the bright amber sky, partook of the sombre tint of twilight. The distant hum of mirth before long died entirely away, and as every boat and every pedestrian had followed the gay procession, the river, fields, and paths seemed on a sudden entirely deserted. Miss Trevelyan still leaned against the parapet wall, lost in thought, until almost unconsciously to herself tears stole down her cheeks.

The scene which she had just beheld portrayed to her mind the history of her own existence. Thus gaily had life first accosted her;—thus had it passed her by,—and thus had it now left her, an isolated being.

She had entered the world one of a large family. Her father, the younger brother of the Earl of Launceston, had been brave and fortunate, had risen high in his profession, and derived an ample income from his various military appointments. Her mother had died when Miss Trevelyan had scarcely attained her sixteenth year; and the same hereditary complaint, which consigned her to the grave prematurely, carried off several of her children; one brother, however, still remained to Miss Trevelyan, but with him she was scarcely acquainted, as he was more than ten years younger than herself, when quite a

Digitized by Google

lad had entered the army, and very soon after followed his regiment to India. Thus almost every individual with whom she had begun life, with whom she had gambolled in childhood, and shared the pleasures of youth, had disappeared one by one, and she alone had remained to watch over the declining health and intellect of her father, a paralytic stroke having for some time previously to his death greatly affected both. Alone with him Miss Trevelyan had continued during the last fifteen years to inhabit the home of her more cheerful days, having ever before her eyes the deserted apartments and vacant places of those whose presence had once seemed a part of the home itself.

In such a dismal, monotonous life, there was certainly nothing calculated to dissipate the gloom which the frequent scenes of sickness and death in her family had thrown over her spirits, undermining the spring of youth. But there was another circumstance, which, perhaps, more than all these losses and deprivations, helped to colour her mind and disenchant her existence. She had in childhood met with an accident, to prevent the evil consequences of which every care had been taken, but in vain; and as she grew up, these consequences were but too apparent, not only in her figure, but in a delicacy of health, the inevitable result of a deformed person. And her character had possibly been even more affected by this accident than her appearance, for, losing her mother just at that age when the mind most needs direction and assistance, and having no one to support her's under the severe trial which such a misfortune imposes, it had preyed even on her good sense (albeit naturally of a superior order,) until, magnifying to herself its importance, and encouraged in this gloomy error by the many depressing circumstances of her youth, she had grown to consider herself as one, not only cut out from all general society, but even from the charities of life, one likely to inspire contempt and ridicule, rather than commiseration and interest. Hence, therefore, an abstracted melancholy of disposition, which reconciled her without murmuring to the dismal seclusion of her life as long as her father lived,

Digitized by Google

but which, on his death, made her look with dismay on a world to which she was as yet a total stranger, and from which she felt herself to be an outcast. Youth had by this time slipped by her, she hardly knew how, but certainly unembellished even by any of those passing pleasures which usually dress up that period of existence; all expectation, all elasticity of mind had fled with it, and she would gladly have remained concealed and unknown in her former home (although now to her become a mausoleum,) rather than make the exertion of seeking another, and facing that world from which she expected nothing but contempt.

This, however, was impossible, for with General Trevelyan's life had ended all his appointments, and, according to his will, every thing of personal property was to be disposed of in order to make up a small heritage for his surviving children. Miss Trevelyan felt that "the world was all before her where to choose,"—a melancholy liberty, more painful, perhaps, than the most arbitrary compulsion, as it seems to cast upon ourselves all responsibility for the comfort or discomfort of our future lives. Various plans and homes were suggested to her by the confidential lawyer, who had had the charge of her father's affairs: but, shrinking from every change either in her way of life or residence, she rejected them one by one until actually forced to come to a decision by being driven from her former home to make way for its new possessor, when chance rather than choice fixed her at Richmond. No one certainly could be less fitted to prove an acquisition to the gossiping, card-playing sisterhood of the place; and, had its members been aware of all that the reader is now in possession of, many a surmise with regard to the new inhabitant, many a plan for acquaintance with her, might have been spared.

It so happened that there was an evening-party next door that very day on which Miss Trevelyan's carriage had been seen unlading at her new residence, and all the company came in open-mouthed on the subject. "And so No. 1 is at last taken," said one.—"Dear me, were you not aware of that," exclaimed another. "I have known

Digitized by Google

it for above a month."—"Oh, then, perhaps you can tell us who our new neighbour is?" all eagerly cried out.—"To be sure," said the well-informed lady; "it is a Miss Trevelyan, but for how long I do not yet know."—"Miss Trevelyan!" repeated the first, "I once had some acquaintances of that name; they were Cornish people—a very good family," added she, looking vastly important—"Good family!" rejoined another. "Why, bless you, Trevelyan is Lord Launceston's family name."—"I should not wonder if she were a near relation of his; perhaps even a sister—or daughter." At this suggestion the Peerage was instantly seized upon, and all who could see without spectacles eagerly looked over the lucky individual who had first got possession of the interesting volume. It was there found that the Honourable Edward Trevelyan, second brother to Lord Launceston, born in 1730, had married Miss Stanley, and had issue, &c. This piece of intelligence gave rise to a general feeling of security, and when upon inquiry of Mrs. Hopkins (the lady of the house,) it was ascertained that Miss Trevelyan came in a very good carriage, attended by a very respectable-looking servant in the Launceston livery, the satisfaction expressed was unbounded, and it was agreed that, at all events, she might safely be called upon. These advances of civility were accordingly made, and during the first week after her arrival at Richmond, her fat footman had each day to travel at least ten times to the door, to receive proffers of friendship from all her neighbours through the medium of their cards. But there the matter ended. No visits were personally returned; no cards even were sent in acknowledgment of them; and in proportion to the flattering expectations which the arrival of the new inhabitant of No. 1 had awakened was the disappointment arising from this, their death-blow, and the consequent indignation excited by such repulsive conduct.

Finery, as has been already said, was, of course, the first motive assigned; that charge which, (without any attempt to ascertain either its justice, or upon what pretensions the individual accused can even affect to deserve it,) is indiscriminately brought forward against every one

Digitized by Google

who objects to general society. Miss Trevelyan was, accordingly, right, or wrong, voted *fine*, and severe were the sarcasms levelled against this her supposed impertinence. "Really, for Miss Trevelyan to give herself such airs as to turn up her nose at the society of Richmond, because, forsooth, she happens to be the daughter of Lord Launceston's younger brother, is too ridiculous; for, after all, what is that?"—"Many of us would, notwithstanding, have gone out of the room before her," said the Honourable Mrs. Hopkins, with emphasis; "and, perhaps, indeed, that is the very reason why she does not choose to visit in the neighbourhood."

Before long, however, her eccentricity was otherwise accounted for: she was observed to go twice to church on every Sunday, consequently she was pronounced to be *serious* and *methodistical*; everybody blessed their stars they had nothing to do with her, and confessed they really could not see what business she had to come and set herself up as better than her neighbours, and to dictate as to right and wrong among them.

This last charge of seriousness was nearer the truth than that of finery, if by seriousness was meant religion, for religious Miss Trevelyan certainly was, a most humble-minded, conscientious Christian; but her religion tinged by her peculiar misfortune, had taught her the emptiness and vanity of all earthly enjoyments, rather than to bear the unavoidable ills of life with cheerfulness, and to enjoy with gratitude those passing gleams of sunshine sent in merciful compensation.

So many years of her life had been passed in solitary abstraction, and she had so long dwelt on the disadvantages of her lot, that she had taught herself to consider the distaste she felt for the intercourse of society as not only unavoidable, but in a great degree meritorious; and although, in moments of peculiarly melancholy irritation, she had felt it hard that an existence apparently so full of interest to others should be to her thus blighted, yet the habitual conviction of her mind was, that the gay and happy must be frivolous, heartless, and irreligious. But these opinions, arising chiefly from the now almost con-

Digitized by Google

stitutional depression of her spirits, did not render her either morose or censorious; charity was enthroned in her heart; and there was not a being in any station of life for whose advantage she would have hesitated to sacrifice her own. To visit in her solitary walks the habitations of poverty, and by her bounty to cause the widow's heart to sing for joy, were the only interests of which she was now susceptible, and at such times a momentary ray of cheerfulness would reflect itself back from the hearts she had gladdened upon her own depressed mind; but it always vanished in the silence and gloom which awaited her return to her own solitary fireside; and, instead of tracing this evil to its true source—instead of considering how greatly the seclusion in which she lived circumscribed her power of being useful to others, and thereby lessened her only enjoyment—she encouraged herself to believe that this tedium of life, of which she was so painfully sensible, was but the natural consequence of that misfortune with which it had pleased Heaven to afflict her, and that her feelings must be shared by all who, from having none of those endearing ties which prolong the vista of existence, see a dead-wall gradually rise at the end of their own.

And to such childless, insulated beings, at the period when recollections instead of anticipations form the character of life, this world must naturally wear a totally different aspect from that which it presents to their more busily-connected neighbours; for there is an awkward corner in human existence at which, bidding of necessity a final adieu to youth, we naturally lose at the same time all lively interest in our own prospects, and are therefore desolate indeed if we cannot identify ourselves with the fate of others. Such feelings may not, perhaps, be inaptly compared to those of a traveller who, after having revelled in the bright skies, the glowing landscapes, and intoxicating romance of Italy, returns home through that flattest and most uninteresting of all countries, la (self-yclept) Belle France. The brilliant sun, which at first starting illumined every object, has disappeared; the constant expectation of fresh enjoyment has passed away; the eye no longer seeks to catch the first glance of some long-

Digitized by Google

expected object; a straight, dull road alone meets it, and the only desire is to arrive with all possible speed at the end of the now wearisome journey.

Miss Trevelyan's character and the circumstances of her former life being now fully explained, it cannot excite surprise that the gay show which glided below her garden, on that evening when she was first introduced to the notice of the reader, should have affected her so strongly. She remained fixed to the spot till darkness spread over every object, and till the bright lamps twinkling on the bridge were reflected in the rippling waters of the Thames; she then slowly ascended the steps leading to her little drawing-room. The heat of the season had long banished a fire, that only substitute for the society of a friend, and the gloomy appearance of her apartment made her almost shiver on entering, although the thermometer was at the moment at near eighty. She rang for candles, and when, in course of time, her old domestic appeared with them she perceived by their welcome light a letter addressed to herself lying on the table before her. She eagerly seized it; a letter is such an event to one who lives alone! It was from her brother, then in India with Sir Arthur Wellesley, from whom she had not heard for several months, and who was now the only remaining being for whom she could feel any real interest.

Colonel Trevelyan wrote much out of spirits; his health had suffered greatly from a wound he had received in the course of his military duties, as well as from the climate of India, and he feared he should in consequence be obliged for a time to relinquish his appointments, and endeavour to get leave of absence, but he did not expect that this would be practicable before the end of the year. He then added, "I have been every way unfortunate of late, and have experienced a sad loss in the death of my friend Howard, whom you have so often heard me talk of. Although much older than myself, he has been my constant companion in arms, and most intimate friend for many years. He fell a victim to the fatigues to which the army has been exposed, and to which he was no way equal; he bequeathed to me on his death-bed rather an awkward

Digitized by Google

charge, but it was one which at such a moment it was impossible to refuse, however unwilling I might be to take such a responsibility on myself. It seems he has a daughter. Even I was not aware of this circumstance till a short time before his death. Her mother was an Italian. Since quite an infant this child has, I find, been in England, and she is now at a boarding-school at Clapham. By Howard's desire, I have, since his death, written to the person who keeps the school, to inform her of the event. This poor girl appears to be left in a most desolate situation, although not destitute; for Howard was well off, and having no near relations in circumstances to give them any claims upon him, he has left every thing in his power to this daughter; but she has never been taken the least notice of by any of his family, and of course they are not likely to be now more favourably inclined towards her. Were you near this poor child, I wonder whether you would object to seeing her? But I talk nonsense, for even should your kindness of heart make you overlook certain prejudices respecting her birth, I know your duties fix you closely at a far distant home, so that it is out of the question; but do you know any one to whose kindness you could so far recommend her, that she might occasionally be visited? It would be a satisfaction to me, who am now her guardian, and therefore answerable for her welfare, to know that she is well taken care of. The name of this poor orphan, by the by, is Theresa, and and in addition she bears that of Howard."

After this followed much that was painful to miss Trevelyan, as it all referred to their father's situation, the letter announcing his death not having reached her brother when he wrote.

Miss Trevelyan pondered much over that part of her brother's letter relative to Theresa Howard. She pondered over it many days. It was true that there were prejudices (and she thought just ones,) against those in Theresa's situation; but in what way could she be affected or contaminated by contact with a poor deserted orphan? At all events she could hardly refuse her brother's

Digitized by Google

request to go and see her, and the visit need not be repeated if she did not like it.

This consideration decided her, and accordingly a pair of post-horses were ordered for the good-looking carriage, and the respectable, fat, deaf servant in the Launceston livery being mounted on the borouche seat, Miss Trevelyan drove to Miss Birch's school at Clapham. To her this was a great effort, for she ever shrunk from presenting herself before those to whom her person was as yet unknown, and this dread of observation had naturally produced a degree of shyness and nervous timidity, which had now become constitutional; so that when, after some difficulty, the house in question was at last found, she grew quite frightened at the prospect of encountering the mistress of the school; and still more perhaps when she thought of the girl herself, to whom she had not an idea what it would be proper for her to say, and who, she fancied, must be at once prejudiced against one of her appearance, if indeed it did not actually excite her ridicule.

On leaving her carriage she was shown into the parlour, where in a short time an elderly lady, with rather a forbidding aspect, joined her, announcing herself as Miss Birch. She looked and spoke as if she had taught syntax, the rule of three, and thorough-bass, all her life; however, when Miss Trevelyan mentioned her errand, and talked of Miss Howard, she relaxed somewhat of her rigidity, expressing great pity for her situation, and saying that she had been much affected by the intelligence of her father's death. Miss Trevelyan endeavoured to discover what sort of girl this Theresa Howard was, but could obtain no positive answer to her inquiries. Miss Birch said that she had evidently been sadly neglected previous to her residence at her establishment—that allowances were to be made in consideration of her having begun her life among foreigners and papists—that she had certainly gained much by her tuition, and that she hoped in time, and under her system of education, she might be still further improved; but that it must be remembered Miss Howard had Italian blood in her veins, and that some faults were never to be corrected—in short Miss Birch was evi-

Digitized by Google

dently one who would never implicate herself by a decided opinion, either in praise or condemnation, and, having given this most unsatisfactory vague account of her young charge she went in search of her, leaving Miss Trevelyan in a flutter of nerves, which every moment increased at the prospect of her interview with her brother's ward. A considerable time elapsed, during which Miss Trevelyan was busily employed in composing appropriate queries and observations to be addressed to the girl, when at last the door re-opened, and Miss Birch again made her appearance, followed by one of the most lovely sylph-like figures nature had ever formed. Never having thought of asking what Theresa's age might be, and Colonel Trevelyan having always talked of her as the *child*, his sister had rather prepared herself to see some awkward, gawky-looking girl, with purple arms, a short thick figure, and with hair dangling down her back. She was, therefore, lost in admiration at the being now before her, who acknowledged her presence by one of those graceful obeisances which nature alone, and not even a first-rate dancing-master, can teach. Theresa being, of course, in deep mourning, her dress and the glossy black of her hair, made her smooth forehead and beautiful rounded throat appear perfectly dazzling. After one quick glance at Miss Trevelyan, her eyes were fixed on the ground, and her cheeks, which, on her first entrance, appeared deadly pale, became coloured with emotion of some sort. Miss Trevelyan, although scarcely less abashed than the girl herself, went kindly up to her, and taking her cold nervous hand in both of her's, "You must look upon me as a friend, my dear Miss Howard," she said, in that mild tone of voice which was peculiar to her. "You know the sacred charge you are now become to my brother, and you must consider me at present as his representative." Theresa's hand trembled in her's, her lip quivered, but she did not speak.

They all sat down, and an awkward pause ensued. At length it was broken by Miss Birch. "Miss Howard is very shy," said she, speaking of her as of one absent, "and of course knows it would not be seemly if she were to talk in my presence. I have no doubt she is much

Digitized by Google

gratified by your kindness in coming to visit her, and would express her thanks if she knew how. I sometimes take some of my young ladies to Richmond for a treat; and if that little junket should take place this season, I will make a point that Miss Howard shall be of the party, that she may have an opportunity of returning your civility; but at present I am going from home. This is, in fact, holiday-time; all my pupils are away, except such who have no friends to go to; those of course I allow to remain on in the house, and Miss Rag stays with them."

"Does Miss Howard, then, go nowhere during the vacations?" inquired Miss Trevelyan, in a tone of commiseration.

"Of course not," replied Miss Birch, drily; "she has, you know, no home to go to: there are two other young ladies in my seminary who are similarly situated. It is very inconvenient to *me*, as I am obliged to keep up an establishment during the whole of the vacation; but Colonel Howard made a point I should do so before he quitted England, and of course I feel myself still bound to keep to the bargain.

During this speech of Miss Birch's, the tears which stole down Theresa's cheeks, notwithstanding all her efforts to restrain them, excited the strongest feelings of interest and pity in Miss Trevelyan, although she could not help suspecting that they proceeded even more from wounded pride at these not very gentle hints with regard to the inconvenience which her dependence occasioned than from any softer feeling.

Just then Miss Birch was called out of the room, and Miss Trevelyan and her young friends were left *tête-à-tête*. No human being possessed a kinder heart than the former; she drew near to the poor girl, and taking her hand, bade her not weep. Theresa, in apparent astonishment, raised her tearful eyes to her who thus addressed her in the voice of kindness, and then, as if impelled by an emotion she could not command, on a sudden threw herself into her arms. Miss Trevelyan greatly moved at this unexpected burst of feeling in one who had hitherto appeared to be a mere automaton, most warmly returned her embrace. In an instant a thousand benevolent schemes

Digitized by Google

passed through her mind; but her natural shyness and solitary habits, every peculiarity of her nature, in short, rose to counteract them, and checked the kind offers that were trembling on her lips. Again there was a long pause.

At length Theresa, wiping her eyes, thanked Miss Trevelyan for her great kindness to her; begged her, when she wrote, to give her duty to her guardian, and to assure him she would ever be guided by his will and wishes, as she had been by those of her—— Again her tears burst forth, and the word *father* could not be uttered.

Miss Birch, followed by a servant bringing in refreshments, at this moment entered. Had she been absent five minutes longer, probably Miss Trevelyan would have profered to the poor orphan at least a temporary asylum under her roof; but Miss Birch seemed to possess the peculiar power of repressing every feeling of the heart by her presence. At her entrance Miss Trevelyan unconsciously left Theresa's side, and Theresa, relinquishing at once her hand, which she had still held in her's, hastily brushed away her tears, and resumed her former immoveable attitude and impenetrable silence.

After Miss Trevelyan had partaken of the offered refreshments as far as she thought civility required, she rose to depart. Theresa had of course also risen from her seat, but did not approach her; in short, in Miss Birch's presence she seemed as if spell-bound. The usual civilities at parting took place. Miss Trevelyan longed to take a more tender leave of the poor girl; but such, (owing to the seclusion of her life,) was her nervous timidity, that as Theresa never moved from her place, she had not courage to go up to her for that purpose. When she had reached the door of the room, she turned again to look at her; but she had walked to the window—her back was turned towards her. And thus they parted.

During her drive home, the kind-hearted Miss Trevelyan thought but of Theresa Howard. She dreamt of her all night; her tearful countenance haunted her all next day. It seemed so cruel to leave her at that odious school, and during the holidays too! were she to pass but a fortnight of that time with her! one week—even a few days! But then what could she do with a girl of her age? how

Digitized by Google

was it possible that any thing so young and probably so gay should have any pleasure in her society? should even get over the unfavourable impression which her appearance would naturally produce? How should she amuse her? and what a dreadful constraint to have her constantly at her side—never to feel alone!

This conflict between *sauvagerie* and kindness continued some days; but at length the latter feeling prevailed. A letter was despatched to Miss Birch, with a proposal that Miss Howard should spend a few days with her at Richmond; and soon after the receipt of the answer, Miss Trevelyan was again on the road to Clapham.

Of course all these movements of the quiet inhabitant of No. 1 did not escape the notice of her vigilant neighbours, reviving all that curiosity about her which, for lack of fresh incidents to feed on, had in some degree died away. "What could she be about? where could she now be always driving to—she, who never used to go out in her carriage from one month's end to another? And when, upon Miss Trevelyan's return after her second expedition, a young person was seen to follow her out of the chaise, and a trunk to be taken out of the boot, all the sisterhood were up in arms. "Well, certainly Miss Trevelyan is the strangest and most mysterious person that ever existed! No wonder she found it dull living alone, for that any one could have foretold; but why could she not associate with her neighbours, instead of going the Lord knows where to fetch the Lord knows whom?"

It was then recollected that there was madness in the Trevelyan family, for Mrs. Hopkins was quite sure there had once been a very queer old admiral of that name. And thus was Miss Trevelyan, in the course of six months, pronounced to be *fine* and exclusive, methodistical and mad, she all the while perfectly unconscious of being an object of conversation or animadversion of any sort.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER II.

Thy good and amiable gifts
The sober dignity of virtue wear not;
And such a witching mien thy follies show,
They make a very idiot of reproof,
And smile it to disgrace. BASIL.

DURING the first twenty-four hours of this new companionship, that glow of heart which ever attends the consciousness of having performed a kind action, made it appear delightful to Miss Trevelyan; and Theresa, laughing and crying by turns, was quite touching in her gratitude.

A reaction, however, soon took place. Miss Trevelyan's spirits had been unusually excited, they now sank in proportion, and she longed for that silence and solitude which habit had rendered so congenial to her mind. To converse was irksome and fatiguing, for she and her new companion had not of course one subject in common. To be silent was worse; for beside her was one whom she felt she ought to entertain, whose presence therefore worried her nerves, and was a weight on her mind. Had Miss Trevelyan then given way to her inclination, she would, probably long before the expiration of the week, have again summoned the good-looking chaise, and sent poor Theresa back to her prison-house, under the charge of deaf John.

But her christain charity here interposed. She remembered that "it endured all things, hoped all things." She therefore submitted to the evil which she had drawn upon herself; and she was rewarded; for Theresa soon found such interesting occupation, that she ceased to be in the least a charge to her kind benefactress, and, merely by the consciousness of her presence, relieved her from that melancholy feeling of entire solitude, which had often saddened her mind. Miss Birch, at her elegant establishment for young ladies, kept those belonging to it in a state of

Digitized by Google

such entire abstinence from all books but those of mere education, (from motives of parsimony as well as prudence,) that Theresa had never yet read any narrative possessing greater interest than Hume's History of England. While amusing herself in looking over the books in Miss Trevelyan's room, she chanced to light upon Madame de Stael's Corinne; her attention was soon arrested by it, and, after reading sufficiently for her imagination to be set on fire, she flew with the precious volume into the garden, in order to enjoy in the luxury of entire solitude the intoxicating pleasure which such a composition cannot fail to excite in a young ardent mind! Her heart beat at the recital of Corinne's talents and triumphs —her tears flowed at her sorrows, and her Italian blood glowing at the description of her own beautiful maternal country, she was so entirely engrossed by the lecture, that time flew unheeded by, and when at length five o'clock struck, it was almost as disagreeable to her to tear herself from the precious volume for that vulgar thing called dinner, as it was to her melancholy companion to leave her solitary meditations in order to perform the duties of an hostess. No sooner was the repast over, than again the darling book was seized, and Miss Trevelyan was allowed unmolested to pass the evening wrapt in reverie and her large shawl, on her bench under her favourite catalpa tree.

Thus by degrees, Theresa, perfectly happy in her new life, gradually ceased to be in Miss Trevelyan's way, or to oppress her mind, and she, on her part, almost unconsciously began to lose a little of her abstraction. She sometimes watched with real pleasure the gay gambols which took place in the garden between Theresa and her little dog, who, delighted at having a play-fellow, had actually, during the last ten days, grown ten years younger, (according to dog computation of time,) and no longer lay snoring at the feet of his sedentary mistress. And when Miss Trevelyan caught the sounds of Theresa's flexible voice, caroling, (as she moved about the house,) some gay Venetian ballad, which her quick Italian ear had caught, as if by instinct, from some strolling musician, she would lay down her serious contemplative book, break the train

Digitized by Google

of her habitually gloomy thoughts, and listen to her clear, fresh, young voice, till it gave her a sensation of gladness. Thus from becoming *used* to Theresa's society, she soon grew to require it; soon felt it a pleasure, on waking of a morning, to think that she should be welcomed at breakfast by the bright smile of happy youth; that she should receive Theresa's warm-hearted kiss on her cheek; that she had some one to speak to—some one to listen to.

And Theresa's society had done more for Miss Trevelyan than all this; more than perhaps she was herself aware of. On the first arrival of her lovely young companion, weak human nature, attacking her at her most vulnerable point, and before principle had time to check the rebellious feeling, surprised Miss Trevelyan into many a melancholy comparison and reflection as she gazed on her beautiful form, and even some tears, almost unconsciously to herself, had occasionally stolen down her meek face, when exaggerating all the advantages it promised her in this life, and the consequent cruel deprivations of her own lot. But when she found that this lovely being, far from shrinking from her with that antipathy which she had so erroneously anticipated, expressed by every means in her power, not only the most touching respect, but the tenderest affection for her person, the mortified self-disgust which she had so long entertained, and which solitude had nurtured, died insensibly away. The possibility of being preferred, of being loved, broke in upon her blighted heart, and lit it up with such a vivifying feeling of gratitude, as to produce in consequence a degree of resignation and even contentment, into which she had hitherto endeavoured in vain to tutor herself by principle. Thus day followed day, week followed week, until Theresa's vacation had nearly expired, and Miss Trevelyan was beginning to think that it would be advisable to return her to Miss Birch's care.

But just at that period, Miss Trevelyan caught a violent inflammatory cold, which for a time settled in her eyes. All occupation was of course forbidden, and her young companion became so useful, indeed so absolutely necessary to her, that it was impossible to think of part-

Digitized by Google

ing from her under such circumstances. Theresa had an affectionate, warm heart, and the kindness of her protectress had made a deep impression upon it; indeed, her gratitude had for the time, even operated a change in her character. For now that her dear Treevy was ill, Theresa was all thought and attention. She sung or read to her by the hour; even patiently reading the books she chose, although they were not of such a kind as to fix her wild wandering mind; for with her, all was fitful and unsettled. She had no rule of action whatever beyond the whim of the moment. Sometimes it was reading, at others music, and at others again, the idle sports of a child, or even of a kitten, to which she was devoted. But now that her benefactress was ill, she checked all the roving wildness of her disposition, and her only wish seemed to be, to administer to her comfort. To be thus an object of devoted affection, was new to Miss Trevelyan; her's was not a heart on which such a delightful feeling could be thrown away, and she thanked Heaven for having sent her this bright spark of life to cheer her lonely existence.

The autumn was past, and winter crept on, and still Theresa was Miss Trevelyan's inmate; for she had not courage just at that period of the year, when solitude is most felt, to deprive herself of the society of one who so delightfully cheered it, and who daily became more necessary and more interesting to her—indeed Theresa's very faults were calculated to increase that interest.—Nature had done much more for her than education ever could have accomplished, for her's was one of those free-born characters which can be tutored by Heaven alone, and which nothing but severe suffering can subdue. But, with this independent spirit, that same nature had endowed her with a kind and generous heart.

Miss Birch (who, had she studied Theresa's disposition all her life, never could have comprehended it) thought that, in crushing for a time that spirit by coldness and severity, she had worked a miracle of reformation; but the inward fire remained smouldering, and wanted only liberty to burst forth with fresh vigour. Miss Trevelyan soon perceived these defects of her young protégée's cha-

Digitized by Google

racter; but severely strict to herself, her mild indulgence spoiled all around her; and how could she chide one, who ever flew to execute and even anticipate her slightest wishes. *Principle* was a word which Theresa knew by name, but which did not convey any clear idea to her mind, and had consequently nothing whatever to do with her conduct. The two great points which had always been insisted upon by Miss Birch in her system of education, were the propriety of going to church, and the impropriety of telling an untruth, and these consequently formed pretty nearly the sum total of Theresa's religious principles and practice; to the first she had submitted, as to an unavoidable evil, and from the latter her natural upright nobleness of mind preserved her, without any effort on her part. She had, of course, been duly taught to repeat her catechism, and had in consequence learned the Commandments by heart, but she never could see how they applied to herself! To bid *her* not steal, murder, bear false witness, or worship idols, seemed absurd, or at least perfectly useless, for she felt no inclination whatever to commit any one of these crimes. She had no parents to honour, no lands to inherit in consequence, in short the decalogue was dismissed from her thoughts as a code of laws no way regarding herself.

Miss Trevelyan soon perceived with pain how sadly deficient her young companion was in every species of religious knowledge, and often introduced the subject into their conversation, and recommended it to her in her studies. But Miss Trevelyan's mind was almost of too spiritualized a nature to be of use to Theresa's. Her piety went far beyond mere moral precepts and professions of faith; for, unenthralled by any earthly passion, and totally indifferent to the usual pursuits and pleasures of the world, her ideas had wandered into a sort of vague mystified contemplative religion, consisting in sensations, rather than actions, and those books which raised her pious soul above the world, and which, with that view, she recommended to Theresa, said nothing whatever to one, who had to begin with the A B C of religion; and more than once, when she had given her such works for her perusal, Miss Trevelyan had found her on the same

Digitized by Google

spot, where she had left her an hour or two before, the volume open at the very page to which she had directed her attention; but with one of Scott or Byron's placed upon it, which the poor thoughtless girl was eagerly devouring, and so entranced by the engrossing fiction, that, when taxed with the offence, she seemed totally unconscious of the strange substitution of which she had been guilty.

No two persons certainly ever appeared less congenial than Miss Trevelyan and her young companion; but perhaps for that very reason (according to universal experience) they added the more to each other's enjoyment. It seemed too but a dull life for one so young and gay as Theresa, for their *tête-à-tête* continued unbroken, and their existence was of clock-work monotony; but then it was a life of comparative liberty, and liberty was as necessary to her mind's health as the breath of heaven to the play of her lungs. She read the books, she sang the songs she preferred, was idle whenever she pleased, and rambled freely, accompanied by Miss Trevelyan's maid and her little dog, in the adjacent paths and meadows. Sometimes she even tempted Miss Trevelyan herself to the shops in the town, or to the terrace-walk on the hill; in short, Theresa's existence was now totally different from what it had been at Miss Birch's seminary, and that was all that she as yet knew of life.

Of course she had not escaped the police-like vigilance of the neighbours; it was wondered who in the world she could be! From such wonders they proceeded to suppositions. These were easily embodied into assertions, and before long the whole affair was completely settled, although without one single fact having transpired on which to build the scandalous suspicions, producing in consequence the exchange of sarcastic smiles and significant looks, whenever Miss Trevelyan and her young companion were mentioned; and the virtuous sisterhood, had they been Catholics, would no doubt have devoutly crossed themselves, as a defence from the defilement of so frail a neighbour as she was supposed to be. For gallantry was now confidently added to poor Miss Trevelyan's long list of offences, notwithstanding her want of personal at-

Digitized by Google

traction; and Theresa was unhesitatingly pronounced to be the unfortunate consequence of an indiscretion in her youth. Miss Trevelyan's unsociable eccentricities, her solitary and apparently neglected existence, were now fully accounted for, and of course no further advances of civility were made. It was even thought to be a great hardship to have a person of that sort living in the same row, with only a low wall of separation between the adjoining gardens. "For it really is not fair for such people to force themselves into a respectable neighbourhood; and I declare it is quite unpleasant," said her next-door neighbour, the Honourable Mrs. Hopkins, (whose honour, having come to her in a round-about, collateral way, was by no means slightly appreciated by herself,) "to live so very near as I do. Why I see the girl constantly on the lawn, and when the windows are open I can hear her sing, and by keeping very still, I can actually hear them talk; indeed, by leaning a little over that corner of my balcony, I can see into their drawing-room!"

"Can you really?" exclaimed two or three of her visiters at once; "how very awkward and disagreeable?" And with one accord they immediately hurried into the designated corner of the balcony, to see if they could catch a glimpse of the offensive pair.

One of the party, more good-natured or less virtuous than the rest, said, that after all nothing actually wrong was positively known respecting Miss Trevelyan, and that she seemed, by what she had heard of her, to be so good and religious, that she really could not help sometimes doubting the truth of the stories against her. "Oh, my dear madam," answered her neighbour, with a smile of contempt at her simplicity, "those sort of people are always prodigiously pious and charitable: I would lay any wager she goes into all the dirty cottages, and reads the Bible to the beggars in the streets; for that is always the way with ladies of that description. I dare say she is cried up as a saint among a particular set; for her being a decided sinner is no objection with them—on the contrary."

Thus was poor Miss Trevelyan still a constant, although an unconscious object of animadversion in the

Digitized by Google

neighbourhood, furnishing a most useful topic when politics or marriages failed, and shunned, as a sort of pestilence, by the inhabitants of Richmond in general. If they chanced to meet her and her young companion walking in the meadows, a large sweep was regularly made in order to avoid them; and, as if frailty was so infectious as to be communicable by touching even the same counter, they never failed to scramble up their purses and gloves in any shop at which they happened to be, immediately on the entrance of Theresa and Miss Trevelyan, who, having no clue to such extraordinary proceedings, were not a little astonished at the peculiar manners of the ladies of Richmond.

Miss Trevelyan heard twice from her brother during the winter. He had received the accounts of his father's death, and of her having taken up her abode at Richmond; but the letters relative to Theresa had not of course then reached him, so that he was still in total ignorance of her being settled under his sister's protection; for *settled* she now appeared finally to be. Miss Trevelyan had ceased to talk of her return to Clapham, and Theresa had, in consequence, ceased even to think of it.

In Colonel Trevelyan's last letter, which hadr eached his sister in February, he talked with confidence of being home early in the ensuing summer. The leaves and verdure which were to adorn that season were now beginning to appear, when, one fine day in April, the same coroneted carriage which had the year before occasioned such a sensation in Paragon Row, was again seen, with its four horses and smart postillions, at Miss Trevelyan's door. More vigorous efforts were made this time to ascertain to whom it belonged. Through the row of trees which edged the road, and by the means of an excellent glass, which had belonged to Mrs. Hopkins's grandfather, the captain of an Indiaman, the arms, the coronet, and crest, were all carefully examined; the peerage was again consulted, and it was proved to be, past doubt, the Earl of Launceston's carriage, livery and all. An old gentleman and a fashionably-dressed young person alighted from it; and as they were so good as shortly after to

Digitized by Google

repair to the garden with their hostess, they afforded ample occupation and subject for conversation to Mrs. Hopkin's and all those friends who were so fortunate as to happen to call upon her at the time. For they were not a little puzzled how to account for the notice thus paid to their frail neighbour by a person of such consequence as Lord Launceston, (although a visit once a year to be sure implied no great degree of intimacy,) and could only charitably conclude that interested motives of some sort prompted this scanty mark of civility—Miss Trevelyan having undoubtedly something very comfortable of her own—and that probably Lord Launceston was too nearly related to her to be able entirely to cast her off, whatever her conduct might have been.

The sisterhood were right in their conjectures, so far, at least, as regarded the near relationship of the party under consideration; for the old gentleman was neither more nor less than Miss Trevelyan's uncle.

Lord Launceston had been twice married; for, having had no children by his first wife, he had shortly after her death formed a second alliance with a young person, who, as to age, might have been his grand-daughter; and it was supposed that the real object of this his reputed love-match was to deprive General Trevelyan of his presumptive succession to the title and estates; the brothers having been for many years previous to the death of the latter, on very bad terms, in consequence of an unfortunate lawsuit respecting some disputed property, which Lord Launceston gained and, as General Trevelyan thought, retained most unjustly. The second Lady Launceston, who died a very few years subsequent to her marriage, fulfilled her husband's wishes by leaving him two children; a son, Lord St. Ives, who, at the time of which we are treating, was still at college, and a daughter, now about nineteen.

In consequence of this unnatural rupture between Lord Launceston and his brother, little intercourse had subsisted between the families for many years, but when, on the death of her father, Miss Trevelyan settled at Richmond, her uncle, for reasons best known to himself, made immediate advances towards a reconcilation, by driving

Digitized by Google

down to see his niece, and the same annual visit was now again in due form repeated. The prominent feature in Lord Launceston's character was pride of rank and family. He looked upon the History of England in no other light than as archives recording his hereditary rights and honours—on the House of Lords as the appointed place in which to assert those rights; and on society in general as the theatre whereon they were to be displayed. The circumstance of being *a Trevelyan*—in his eyes covered a multitude of sins; and his attentions to his niece were therefore chiefly dictated by his respect for himself, in consideration of her near relationship, and because she and her brother were, with the exception of his own children, the only remaining descendants of his branch of that illustrious family.

In consequence of the fraternal quarrel already alluded to, Lord Launceston had hitherto totally neglected his nephew, Frederick, although, in addition to their near relationship, he was also his godson. But now that this once despised relative had risen high in the army, that his name had appeared in many a gazette, and that he had been particularly mentioned by Sir Arthur Wellesley, the calculating uncle began to think he might as well make *cause commune* with one who seemed likely to add fresh honours to his name, and as a first step towards conciliating the nephew, he thought it would be wise to propitiate the niece.

The Lady Augusta, who now on his second visit to Miss Trevelyan accompanied her father, was one of those unfortunate beings, who, having received what is called an excellent, regular, finished education, had been deprived by it of nearly every spark of natural intelligence. All originality of character, all liveliness of feeling, had been deadened, if not totally extinguished, and although her conduct and manners were beyond criticism, they, as well as her person, were as uninteresting as blameless. No one on making Lady Augusta's acquaintance could possibly have detected a fault, but it would have been equally difficult to discover a charm.

As Theresa happened to be in the room with Miss Trevelyan when Lord Launceston and his daughter ar-

Digitized by Google

rived, she was of course presented to them, and at first her well sounding name, and peculiarly prepossessing appearance, obtained for her the usual attentions of civility; but, on hearing from his niece who and what she was, Lord Launceston (who piqued himself on knowing the connections of all those who were worth knowing any thing about, and who was too close a questioner on such matters for it to be possible to evade his inquiries,) immediately drew back, and appeared to mount so high on his stilts of rank and family, as no longer to be aware even of the presence of the poor illegitimate orphan, descanting freely on her situation as if she were not by, and in but a half-suppressed voice, lecturing Miss Trevelyan on her very blameable imprudence and want of due consideration for herself, her family, and the opinion of the world, in countenancing any one of that description.

If it had ever been possible to rouse Miss Trevelyan to anger, she would certainly have warmly resented these affronting observations on her young favourite; but such impetuous feelings had been long since eradicated from her character, and she merely quietly replied, that, until her brother's arrival she could settle nothing about his ward, and that he would of course be guided in all arrangements relative to her future destination by her deceased father's wishes.

As Miss Trevelyan spoke these words, she glanced her eyes fearfully towards Theresa, and was soon aware by the heightened colour in her cheeks, that Lord Launceston's animadversions had reached her ears. She and Lady Augusta had immediately on the arrival of the latter seated themselves together, as being, by similarity of age, natural companions, and owing to Theresa's unaffected frankness and peculiarly attractive manners, their acquaintance had begun most prosperously, the Lady Augusta having even been drawn into a degree of easy familiarity, of which she was not often guilty with strangers, but into which she thought she might safely relax with one of the name of Howard, particularly as the families of Howard and Trevelyan were connected by marriage.

As the conversation between Miss Trevelyan and Lord

Digitized by Google

Launceston grew more animated, that of his daughter with the despised orphan gradually died away; for Augusta had also overheard some of her father's observations, and, soon perceiving a marked difference in his manner towards her new acquaintance, she immediately entrenched herself within that freezing distance of manner which was most natural to her, and which she concluded she was now called upon to reassume. Theresa, on her part, was not one to forgive injurious treatment on principle. Her sensitive nature could ill brook injustice of any kind, although her heart readily beat responsive to the slightest mark of kindness: she therefore soon ceased to endeavour to propitiate those who evidently despised her, and sat immoveable, in proud and angry silence, until the party at length became so awkwardly taciturn, that Miss Trevelyan, in the hope that change of scene might also produce some of feeling, proposed adjourning to the garden.

"Theresa!" said she, in a low tone of voice to her young friend, as they were about to follow their guests out of the drawing-room, "I can read and enter into all your feelings, but remember these are *my* friends and relations;" and she gently pressed her arm.

At those last words, Theresa's face again grew crimson, and tears started into her eyes. "You have there," said she, "hit on the only consideration which could make me forgive such unkindness, which could prevent me from this instant locking myself up in my own room," and she made a step towards the ascending stairs.

"Foolish girl!" said Miss Trevelyan, smiling and catching hold of her hand, "you allow that the consideration of the offenders being my friends has some weight with you—will not the idea of pleasing me induce you to go a step further?"

"It *should*, I am sure," replied Theresa; and, without adding another word, she followed her friend towards the garden.

When there, many a kind look of encouragement did Miss Trevelyan cast upon her young protegée, and at last with pleasure observed her so far to overcome her angry feelings as again to make advances of civility to-

Digitized by Google

wards Lady Augusta. But it would not do—Augusta was not now to be propitiated, and, Theresa's love for her dear Treevy being unequal at last any longer to contend with her pride, she gave the matter up, and becoming as cold and distant as her aristocratic visiter, so dead a silence ensued, that it seemed as if the whole party were solely occupied in watching for the sound of the bell which would announce the return of the much wished-for carriage, and thus put an end to so disagreeable a visit.

Many inhabitants of villas near London will probably enter into Miss Trevelyan's feelings during this last hour of her relation's visit, although they may never have been placed in precisely the same situation as that which made it so particularly disagreeable to her. For, of all species of social intercourse, that which takes place between individuals of the gay world of London and their friends in its vicinity, is, perhaps, the most unsatisfactory and disappointing. The reason is obvious; leading totally different lives, engrossed by different interests, they have none of that *commérage de societé*, which carries on conversation with tolerable ease between those who live in the same set, even without their possessing any peculiar congeniality of mind. And if it must be confessed that it is difficult (at least among English people,) to dispose of a couple of hours of social companionship without the mortifying help of cards, games, or music; what resource is there for a species of intercourse from which such occupations are necessarily banished—where there is no rallying point, no neutral ground, on which these *soi-disant* friends, can meet and parley? The details of the garden, the farm, or the village, cannot interest those who are engrossed by the more exciting pleasures of the metropolis; still less, perhaps, can the denizen of the country enter into those worldly pursuits which, contemplated from that degree of distance, equally precluding being drawn into their vortex and blinded to their frivolity, must astonish, even revolt those whose hours follow each other in the ordinary quiet duties and occupations of home; while their London friends, on their part, are naturally provoked by a degree of indifference to the affairs of the world, which they may impute to narrowness

Digitized by Google

of mind, or an affectation of superior wisdom and sanctity. Thus a meeting, from which both parties probably anticipated much pleasure, necessarily ends in disappointment and *ennui*. The charms of the fresh verdure and of the perfumed air, the extraordinary beauty of the foliage, (which *extraordinary* beauty, by the way, is noticed every successive year as a fresh miracle in nature:) are soon discussed; and after a walk round the small parterre, and collecting a nosegay formed of the owner's choicest plants, which is probably laid aside and forgotten long before the visit is over, little more remains to be said or done, not half enough, at least, to fill up the two necessary hours to be passed while the horses are rested and fed, and the servants made tipsy at the next alehouse. Even luncheon, that great restorative to mind and body on such occasions, fails to occupy the hoped-for portion of time, till at length the London visiter, no longer able to endure the endlessness of the last half-hour, looks at her watch, thinks it must have stopped, that there must have been some mistake about the carriage, and, begging leave to ring the bell, in a tone of impatience orders it to come round directly. Thus the friends part with, perhaps, still greater mutual satisfaction than they originally met; and, equally exhausted by the vain attempt at being agreeable, the one soon falls asleep in her carriage, and the other over her book on the sofa.

There can be no doubt that Theresa saw Lord Launceston's carriage drive away with as much delight as was ever experienced by any unfortunate owner of a villa when thus dismissing a London friend, and certainly with much more satisfaction than Mrs. Hopkins could have conceived it possible for any one to feel on the departure from her door of a carriage, which could boast of an earl's coronet on the panels.

"Thank Heaven they are gone!" exclaimed Theresa, as with restored vivacity she lightly sprung up-stairs; "and I trust it will be many a day before we are again so favoured by such *right honourable* visiters; at all events it will be many a day before I shall forget their unkindness."

Digitized by Google

"Theresa," said Miss Trevelyan, looking her gravely in the face, "are such sentiments right, do you think?"

"I don't know whether they are right or wrong, but surely they are natural!"

"And it is for that very reason that we should be suspicious of them," said Miss Trevelyan. "Do you remember what we this very morning read?"

"Oh, yes! I remember quite well," replied Theresa, with quickness; "but surely such grave rules have little to do with morning visits and visiters, and I do not see why I am bound to be civil to those, who are not only not civil to me, but positively unkind."

"Because," said Miss Trevelyan, "we are to return good for evil."

Theresa did not again reply, and, after a moment's pause, going up to her friend with an altered look and manner, "Ah, Treevy! it is not every one who can be like you, even if they try—which, perhaps, I do not; but at all events may I not at least say that I hope Lord Launceston and his daughter will not again soon come to make us quarrel, and to make you look grave at me!" And so saying putting her arms round Miss Trevelyan's neck, she looked in her face with such a winning smile, that her disarmed monitor could not find it in her heart to chide one so lovely, so fascinating.

CHAPTER III.

Oh! but, madam, that is the very reason that it was believed at once; for she has always been so very cautious and reserved, that every body was sure there was some reason for it at the bottom. *School for Scandal.*

As summer advanced, Miss Trevelyan became nervously anxious for news of her homebound brother. The post was now a daily object of intense interest; preparations were already made in the house for his reception, and Theresa's imagination was busily at work picturing

Digitized by Google

to herself that guardian who was to supply to her the place of a father.

One day, after a long walk with her usual companions, the maid and the little dog, she on returning home saw a hack chaise at the door, and fat John waddling backwards and forwards with luggage. She hurried on, to inquire who was arrived?

"Who! why the Colonel, to be sure," said John grinning from ear to ear.

"The Colonel!" repeated Theresa: "do you mean Colonel Trevelyan, my guardian?"

"Ay, Miss, the guardsman as you calls him;" for John did not hear very distinctly. Theresa's heart began to beat with awe and anxiety. "And has Miss Trevelyan seen him?" she inquired.

"Seen him! why, Lord bless you, she has been in such a taking, crying, and sobbing, for all the world as if she was sorry he was come back; but she is pacified now, and they are together on the settee in the parlour, talking about everything."

Theresa entered the house, and stepping softly past the door of the drawing-room, bounded up the stairs to her own apartment, where she anxiously watched and listened, expecting every minute to be sent for; but a full hour passed and no summons came. Theresa did not like neglect any better than her neighbours; and at last, growing mortified at being so totally disregarded, she determined on inquiring whether Miss Trevelyan had been informed of her return home. She therefore opened her door in order to go in search of John, but the sound of footsteeps on the stairs made her instantly stop, as she had by this time worked herself up into such a state of nervous agitation at the prospect of the much longed-for, yet dreaded, meeting with her guardian, that she was terrified at the idea of falling in with him unawares.

The footsteps advanced—and Miss Trevelyan appeared. "Oh! there you are," said she to Theresa, "I was coming in search of you, for Frederick is anxious to be made acquainted with his adopted daughter."

Theresa flew up to her friend, giving her a kind kiss of congratulation on her brother's safe return. Miss

Digitized by Google

Trevelyan's cheek was still wet with tears, her whole frame still shook with emotion. "We had almost forgotten you," said she, smiling, as she drew Theresa's arm within her's. "We have had so much to say to each other, so many painful subjects to revert to; but that is all over now, and I trust nothing but comfort and happiness is in store for us all." And again Miss Trevelyan pressed Theresa's hand, as if wishing to identify her with the pleasurable feelings of the moment.

They had by this time reached the door of the drawing-room, when Theresa involuntarily fell back. "This is very awful," said she, drawing a long breath and shrinking behind her friend. Colonel Trevelyan had walked towards the door to greet his ward, and was familiarly approaching her, when on seeing Theresa, he also stopped short. In the hurry and agitation of the meeting between the brother and sister, after a separation of so many years, Theresa had, as Miss Trevelyan confessed, been scarcely thought of or mentioned, and in consequence of Colonel Howard always designating her as "*the child*," Colonel Trevelyan had, like his sister, (previously to their first interview at Miss Birch's,) pictured to himself a raw, uncouth school-girl. Startled at now beholding so very different an object, his hand, which had been protectingly extended towards his adopted daughter, fell on beholding her, and he unconsciously drew back with feelings of awe and admiration. Theresa, on her part, was certainly not less surprised than her guardian, when, instead of a middle-aged person, like her father, whom she had expected to see, the rapid glance which she now took of the object before her, showed her a tall handsome military-looking man, apparently not much past thirty.

> "On his bold visage, midde age
> Had slightly pressed its signet sage;
> Yet had not quenched the open truth,
> And fiery vehemence of youth."

For a minute both the guardian and ward stood immoveable, as if equally at a loss how to accost each other, till Miss Trevelyan, with a playfulness of manner

Digitized by Google

unusual to her, took her brother's hand, and placing Theresa's in it,

"Why, how shy and frightened you both look;" said she. "I see I must act as master of the ceremonies, and go through the regular forms of introduction, in order that you may begin your acquaintance."

Theresa's hand was kindly pressed by Colonel Trevelyan, but she drew it hastily away without even looking in his face, and continued during the remainder of that day unusually taciturn, appearing wholly occupied with her own thoughts, or her work, from which her eyes were scarcely ever withdrawn; while Colonel Trevelyan, on his part, taking advantage of their intent application, allowed his to wander in admiration over her beautifully carved features, the exquisite *contour* of her head, and the graceful long white throat which supported it.

On leaving the drawing-room at bed time, Miss Trevelyan followed Theresa to her own apartment, her kind heart prompting her to more than usual tenderness towards her young friend, in order to convince her that this new interest could not supersede that which had now for above a twelvemonth sweetened her existence; for, having observed Theresa's unusual abstraction, she feared she might have been visited by some such feelings.

"Well, Theresa," said she, "I hope you and my brother will soon become good friends, and that you will not continue to find him so awful as he appears to be at first sight."

Theresa smiled. "I must own I do feel afraid of him," said she; "and somehow, I am not so happy as when we were alone."

"Surely," replied Miss Trevelyan, "Frederick is not so very forbidding; his reception of his adopted daughter was most kind, and his expressions with regard to her, are, I assure you, not less so."

"Oh! yes," said Theresa, tears starting into her eyes —"but he is so unlike my father; so different from what I had expected—perhaps—in short—I am not enough in awe of him; for how can I feel the sort of deference which is, I suppose, due to a guardian, for one so young

Digitized by Google

and so good-looking? But," continued she, after a moment's pause, "I dare say that in a day or two we shall be very good friends, and at all events, whatever effect Colonel Trevelyan's presence may have upon me, I rejoice at the happiness he has brought to my dear Treevy," and so saying, tenderly embracing her benefactress, she took leave of her for the night.

When the trio met at breakfast next day, much of the awkwardness of the preceding evening appeared to have already vanished. Miss Trevelyan was unusually cheerful, and their new inmate so very agreeable, that Theresa, in spite of herself, resumed her usual spirits, becoming insensibly at her ease with her guardian. And if he had before admired her downcast, blushing shyness, still more was his attention rivetted by the fascination of her dark eyes, which seemed by their sparkling intelligence to illuminate every object on which they rested.

But while each succeeding day now appeared but to increase Colonel Trevelyan's admiration for his ward, and her evident satisfaction in his society, his manner towards her became gradually more distant and embarrassed, as if he had caught the infection of that awe which she was now rapidly exchanging for friendly familiarity. Colonel Trevelyan, like his sister, was naturally of a grave, retiring disposition, and the delicate health from which he at present suffered, in consequence of a severe wound received while serving in India, had added a peculiar air of languor to his person and manners. But the keen glance of his commanding eye, and the determined expression of his close-shut lips, showed there was no lack of energy in his character; while his conversation, although particularly easy and unpretending, proved him to possess a highly cultivated mind.

About a week after his arrival at Richmond, Colonel Trevelyan, who had been entrusted by his late friend Howard with a small packet for a certain Sir Henry Williams, set out in search of the latter, in order to deliver up his charge, as he found that he resided at no great distance in the village of Twickenham. Trevelyan soon reached the designated house, and introducing himself as Colonel Howard's friend, met with a most kind reception

Digitized by Google

both from Sir Henry and Lady Williams, with whom he soon found himself on an easy footing of intimacy, for Sir Henry was one of those frank, open-hearted beings with whom it was impossible for the most formal not to relax, even without such an additional recommendation as being a friend's friend.

During the visit, Trevelyan was more than once on the point of naming Theresa, but as Sir Henry never even alluded to her, and to his surprise appeared as if ignorant even of her existence, he did not like to bring her forward until she could herself propitiate him in her favour by her peculiarly attractive appearance, for Trevelyan had learned from his sister how strongly Lord Launceston had expressed himself with regard to the poor deserted orphan, even taking Miss Trevelyan to task for befriending her, and he thought it not impossible that others might view her in the same obnoxious light.

When Trevelyan rose to depart, Sir Henry, shaking him heartily by the hand said, "Where are you to be found, my dear sir, that I may do myself the pleasure of calling upon you?"

"With my sister at Richmond," said he, "where I hope to see you; and I am sure," he added, turning to Lady Williams, "Miss Trevelyan will be delighted to make your ladyship's acquaintance."

Both Lady Williams and her husband looked embarrassed—they made no direct reply—but rather hastening than opposing Trevelyan's departure, Sir Henry accompanied him out of the room, saying, "Oh! yes, yes, *I* shall certainly come and pay my respects to you very soon, and I am sure I shall have every reason to be grateful to our poor friend Howard for having procured me the pleasure of your acquaintance."

A few days after this the promised visit was paid, and Sir Henry, on giving his name, was immediately ushered into the drawing-room by old John, too happy of an opportunity of showing off his long uncalled-for accomplishments as groom of the chambers. Theresa was alone in the apartment at the time, practising a new song, and although John had in due form named both her and her visiter on ushering him in, yet, her back

Digitized by Google

being turned towards the door, she heard and saw nothing until Sir Henry had been a minute or two in the room and actually stood before her. She instantly started from her seat, a beautiful blush illumined her face, and making him a graceful curtsy she vanished out of the room.

The old soldier who, notwithstanding a head whitened with years and service, had still a quick eye for beauty, was so struck with this lovely apparition, that, even after Trevelyan had joined him, he was still haunted by it; and, as soon as the first salutations were over, he began with, "I fear I have put your young lady to flight, for I suppose the person whom I found in the room was—" and he stopped short, as if at a loss how to designate her.

"Miss Howard," said Trevelyan, and he felt his colour, though he hardly knew why, mount in his face on naming her.

"Oh! that's what you call her, rejoined Sir Henry. "I have heard of her before; 'faith, she is a beautiful girl, and sings like a nightingale, for as she did not hear me come in, I ventured to stand a minute or two listening to her." Then, after a moment's pause and seeming reflection, while evidently pursuing the train of his own thoughts, Sir Henry added, "Lady Williams and I shall be too happy, at all times, to see *you* at our house; but, as for Miss Trevelyan, you must be aware,"—and he again stopped, apparently not very well knowing how to proceed.

"Oh, no apologies, my dear Sir Henry," said Trevelyan smiling, for he thought there might have been some little foolish punctilios between the ladies, as to which was to call first: "I am quite aware, I assure you, of my sister's retiring habits and manners, the circumstances of her early life having naturally led her to shun rather than seek society."

"Oh, yes, I know all that, and it is very proper—very proper," said Sir Henry, interrupting him. "No one can, I am sure, but commend Miss Trevelyan's conduct in that respect."

"Why, indeed, I do not," said Trevelyan, again smiling at Sir Henry's quick manner of settling the busi-

Digitized by Google

ness; "on the contrary, I cannot help lamenting both on Miss Howard's account and my sister's, that she should have taken so unfortunate—"

"Ay, ay, that she should have taken the girl to live with her; there I quite agree with you; and, surely, my dear sir, between friends, was it not rather strange and ill-judged in Miss Trevelyan to bring her forward?"

"Indeed, Sir Henry," said Trevelyan, not a little astonished at this remark, "I must again beg leave to differ from you, for, I must confess, I cannot see my sister's conduct in that light; my notions on such matters may be different from those of many, and of course it was not what Howard ever could have asked himself, nor should I, perhaps, ever have proposed such a thing to my sister, although I know her to be one of the kindest of beings."

"It was carrying her *kindness*, as you call it, rather *far*," said Sir Henry, again eagerly interrupting him; "and, if I had been you, I never would have allowed Miss Trevelyan to have had any thing to do with the girl ostensibly: calling her Howard, too, marks the thing so much: why, on the whole, I am not sure whether it would not have been better to have given her the name of Trevelyan, and let the world suppose she was your daughter; though, to be sure," added Sir Henry laughing, "you would have been rather a young papa."

"And it would, surely, have been an extraordinary stretch of friendship," replied Trevelyan, "sacrificing my own reputation to screen my friend's; although I do not, perhaps, quite enter into your very strict notions on such subjects, and I must say," he continued, warmly, "the world in general does not consider persons in Miss Howard's situation as reflecting the degree of disgrace upon those who may be called upon to befriend them which it seems you do."

Sir Henry smiling, said, "Well, well, we wont discuss the matter, for it is certainly one of too delicate a nature even for a friend's interference, and I am sure you will believe I did not mean any way to hurt your feelings."

A pause ensued, both parties seeming a little disconcerted; at last Sir Henry, whose mind still ran upon the

Digitized by Google

beautiful vision he had seen on first entering the room, said, "Miss Howard is not at all like her poor father."

"No," said Trevelyan, "I believe it is her mother whom she resembles."

"I am no judge," replied Sir Henry, with some astonishment in his manner. "I have not yet had the pleasure of seeing her."

"Yet!" repeated Trevelyan, "why her mother has been dead these many years; died, I believe, very soon after her birth."

Sir Henry stared. "The circumstances of that part of our friend Howard's life," continued Trevelyan, "seemed too painful for him to dwell upon, and when on his death-bed he bequeathed his daughter to my care, all he told me of her story was, that her mother was an Italian of good family, not even divulging her name."

"Miss Howard's mother an Italian!" repeated Sir Henry, with the bewildered look of one awaking out of a dream. "Are you quite sure?"

"Certainly I am," said Trevelyan, equally astonished at this question; "there could have been no reason why Howard should deceive me on that point, and particularly at such a moment.

Sir Henry stared at him for a minute, and then burst into immoderate laughter. Trevelyan positively thought his new friend must have been seized with a fit of madness, nor had he for some time any better opinion of his sanity, when, by the broken expressions which escaped from him, it appeared that he had supposed Miss Trevelyan to be the mother of a girl whose father she had never even set eyes on.

An *eclaircissement* now soon took place, and, however disposed to anger at the abominable story thus propagated to his sister's disadvantage, there was something so particularly ridiculous to Trevelyan in the whole affair, when he considered its impossibility in every way, that he could not help himself joining in his companion's laugh; but when the merriment occasioned by this well-concocted tale of scandal had subsided, and Trevelyan's naturally angry feelings at the insult offered to his sister returned, even then, he hardly knew on whom he could vent his

Digitized by Google

indignation, as it was very evident that the whole story was the fabrication of her next-door female neighbours and their card-playing coterie; and that there was therefore no one from whom he could well demand satisfaction.

It was in consequence agreed upon between the friends, that the less noise made about the matter the better, as there was no doubt that the absurd accusation and the prejudice which it had naturally excited against Miss Trevelyan, would die away now that Sir Henry was empowered to contradict the falsehood, but that as a first step towards its destruction, Lady Williams should immediately call upon Miss Trevelyan. Trevelyan thought it best to say nothing about this foolish affair to his sister, but merely to inform her of Lady Williams's intended visit, and of his wish that she should meet her advances of civility with every mark of good-will on her part; for, Sir Henry having been a particular friend of Colonel Howard's, he and Lady Williams might in consequence prove most desirable acquaintances for Theresa.

The very next day the promised visit was made, and Miss Trevelyan's natural goodness of heart gave to her reception of her new visiters that degree of courtesy, which, owing to long habits of seclusion and her great dislike to presenting herself before strangers, her manners generally wanted. Theresa's eyes sparkled with satisfaction when receiving marks of kindness from her father's friend; and as Trevelyan watched those speaking eyes, and witnessed Sir Henry and Lady Williams's very evident admiration of his young charge, he felt his heart overflow with such universal love and good-will, that he almost wondered from what cause such a sudden fondness for all his fellow-creatures could have proceeded. For still, self-deceived by their relative situation of guardian and ward, he did not seek for the explanation of his philanthropy in that passion which warms the heart to all around.

It so happened that Lady Williams was acquainted with the Honourable Mrs. Hopkins, (that next door inhabitant of Paragon Row, whose ears and eyes were so disagreeably contaminated by their proximity,) and, on leaving Miss Trevelyan, she purposely called upon her.

Digitized by Google

On entering, Lady Williams found a conclave sitting on the business of her visit to the proscribed tenant of No. 1; for, her carriage having been seen for some time waiting at her door, the alarm had soon spread in the neighbourhood, and Mrs. Hopkins's drawing-room was in consequence filled with morning visiters, who from the veranda had been actively employed during the last half hour watching with intense curiosity the friendly intercourse and shaking of hands, which had been going on in the adjoining garden.

Lady Williams's unexpected announcement produced an instantaneous silence—all looked at her with the horror with which they might have beheld one issuing from a pest-house—and when on allusion being made to her visit to Miss Trevelyan, she proclaimed the mistake of the whole neighbourhood with regard to her character, declaring her spotless fame and virgin purity to be beyond the shadow of doubt, and moreover affirmed that the supposed parents of the poor Theresa were total strangers to each other, the disappointment and consternation were general. Miss Trevelyan's affronting rejection of all advances of civility had marked her out as an object of dislike and animadversion; and her being cleared from the charge of frailty, therefore, far from restoring her to the favour of her neighbours, only added to their ill-will by proving to them its injustice; they therefore never rested until they had fixed upon another cause for accusation, and consequently with one accord they fell back upon the second clause in their indictment against her, namely, that of Methodism, and from this time directed all their attacks against saints and hypocrites.

But when this wise and charitable declaration of war against Miss Trevelyan was agreed upon by her neighbours, they had not, with all their vigilance, discovered that the tall, handsome, military-looking person, who had that morning been seen in the garden below the house, was not only her brother, but likely to become a fixed resident at Richmond. When this fact was ascertained past all doubt, by Betty, Mrs. Hopkins's maid, great were the lamentations which followed. How peculiarly vexatious that all this should have happened! and in a neigh-

Digitized by Google

bourhood, too, where handsome single men and next heirs but one to a peerage were not only *not* plenty, but had actually, from their scarcity, become mere dreams of the imagination with all the desolate spinsters of the place.

To poor Mrs. Hopkins Colonel Trevelyan's useless vicinity was peculiarly tantalizing, as the daily sight of him constantly reminded her of her deprivation; and she was made fully sensible of her extreme ill luck, when, a few days after his arrival, she gave an entertainment to her Richmond friends. A full fortnight had been employed in the composition of the party and collecting her beaux; and yet, notwithstanding all her labours, the show of gentlemen on the appointed day consisted of the curate, who, however, was a capital whist-player, the apothecary, and a gouty old admiral. In vain, while attempting to arrange her guests at dinner, did she call upon these three gentlemen to divide her nine ladies; the thing was not to be accomplished by any rule of arithmetic! and poor Mrs. Hopkins's imagination again wandered wistfully to the other side of the cruel partition-wall, which separated her parlour from that of her next neighbour's.

Nor was her regret at the absence of the handsome Colonel diminished, when, in disposing of her company in the evening, she was obliged to surround the loo-table with an unbroken row of caps and petticoats, and when, after compelling her tribe of young ladies each in their turn to play a waltz, to which no one listened, and no one *could* dance, for lack of partners, she at last saw them reduced to the melancholy resource of contending for a needle-book at a pool of commerce; that endless variety of annuals and keepsakes not having yet appeared in the world, which have since proved such a blessing to givers of, and attendants at, country tea-parties.

The longest evening, as well as day, will have an end, and this one ended like all its predecessors; but it did not leave the Honourable Mrs. Hopkins in the most complacent of humours, and in consequence, the Trevelyan family became, as usual in such cases, the object of attack. "I presume Colonel Trevelyan intends to be as fine and exclusive as his sister?" said she to her two remaining visiters, who were waiting for the return of the fly to take

Digitized by Google

them home. "They condescend, however, it seems, to be acquainted with the Williamses, at Twickenham, though I don't know *who* or *what* they are to be selected for that honour. Lady Williams was vastly consequential about her new friends the other morning, and seemed to fancy it was to make a prodigious difference to *us*, Miss Trevelyan turning out to be an honest woman—I am very glad for her sake she is so; but really as to calling upon her again in consequence, which was evidently the drift of Lady Williams's visit to me—*that* I certainly shall not do; poor dear Mr. Hopkins, (Lord Ladbrook's first cousin, you know,) used to say it was the duty of all persons to consider what was due to themselves, and I think I paid Miss Trevelyan sufficient compliment by leaving my name with her when she first came here; for it is not on every body I *do* call, and I really cannot demean myself so far as again to make advances to her, because, forsooth! it now suits her convenience to be acquainted in the neighbourhood; for, of course, all this stir is because they want that girl to be asked about, and because she is afraid her brother will find it dull, as well he may—but I can't help that. If poor dear Mr. Hopkins was alive, perhaps I might have prevailed upon him to call upon Colonel Trevelyan, notwithstanding all that has passed; but as it is, he must just take his chance."

"Certainly! (said her friend, Miss Brown,) and it is really perfectly ridiculous the fuss and bother these Trevelyans are always making among us, as if they were of such excessive consequence; and after all, who are they?"

"Ay, who are they?" repeated Mrs. Hopkins, a smile of satisfaction brightening up a brow on which care had evidently sat during the last six hours.

And with that comforting reflection on their neighbour's insignificance, the friends parted—Mrs. Hopkins retiring to her widowed couch to dream of side-dishes, single gentlemen, trumps, and tea-cups.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IV.

Oh then 's the hour for those who love,
Sweet, like thee and me;
When all 's so calm below, above,
In Heaven and o'er the sea:
When maidens sing sweet barcarolles
And Echo sings again,
So sweet that all with ears and souls
Should love and listen then.

MOORE.

WHILE all this was passing at Mrs. Hopkins's, the party, next door, in blissful ignorance of their unpopularity, were enjoying a degree of happiness seldom permanent in this world. Miss Trevelyan, no longer left to her melancholy reflections, but surrounded by the innocent interests of life, seemed to have entered on a new existence, and was in consequence positively cheerful. Her brother, on his part, dreamed away the hours in that almost unearthly state of felicity, occasioned by the first gleam of a violent passion on the soul; when before we acknowledge it to ourselves no questions are asked as to a possible return, no views are taken into a doubtful future, and there is no wish but to enjoy the present intoxicating happiness which it imparts. Colonel Trevelyan had often before admired beauty—he had often experienced those passing interests which amuse the first youth of every man, but none of those fancies of the imagination had proved themselves to be more than fancies, and he was not therefore aware of his present danger, until entangled beyond all power of extricating himself. He still called Theresa his *ward*, his *friend's daughter*, and, presuming upon that apologetical connexion, he fearlessly gave way to the strong interest with which she inspired him; while Theresa, on her part, appeared to have no wish, no object in life, but to please her kind benefactors. It seemed a gratification to her on all occasions to seek Colonel Trevelyan's advice and approbation, as she would

Digitized by Google

have done that of her father, expressing in the warmest terms her deep sense of her obligations to him. And his heart at times thrilled with pleasure at such proofs of her confiding affection, although at others he could have almost wished her less open, less at her ease, and hardly knew how to meet the artless familiarity of her manner.

Happiness was peculiarly suited to the display of Theresa's character; for, uninfluenced as she was by any sense of duty, and solely governed by the feelings of the moment, this total want of directing principle might, under less favourable circumstances, have betrayed itself. But, as Trevelyan now saw her, her mind appeared in perfect harmony with her lovely person; all was soft, smiling, pure, and bright; her temper was tried by no unkindness; she was exposed to no mortifying neglect; each succeeding day was prosperous as the last, "and still more blessed," and her only task in life seemed to be freely to enjoy the happiness bestowed upon her, and to love those who promoted it.

The addition of Colonel Trevelyan to their party necessarily, in various ways, changed his sister's mode of life, and thereby added to Theresa's enjoyments, as he promoted many an amusement which had hitherto been entirely out of the question. Instead of being reduced to the dull companionship of Humphries for air and exercise, she now took long walks and rides with her guardian. When she went out to sketch, he was her constant companion. When a wet day confined them to the house, he read to her by the hour, while she finished her drawings, or he accompanied her when she required a second in her songs.

And all this Miss Trevelyan, in the unsuspecting innocence of her heart, herself encouraged, fearing that her brother might find his present life dull, and that she should in consequence lose the society of one who added so much not only to her own enjoyment, but to that of the being to whom she was daily becoming more attached. Had dullness been the worst evil to which Trevelyan was then exposed, it would have been well, but all these domestic habits of life were peculiarly dangerous to a person of his disposition, when his only companions

Digitized by Google

were a most indulgent and often abstracted elderly sister, and a lovely girl of seventeen: for what sort of intercourse can be so ensnaring as that into which we are drawn by a life of such total retirement, that one object alone necessarily fills up the existence? What species of intimacy is so irresistible as that formed over a pianoforte and music-books; when the songs together sung embody feelings to which the tongue in *propria persona* dares not give utterance, and the music serves as an excuse for the familiar interchange of looks and words which otherwise would not have been ventured upon? If our companions possess the acknowledged power of throwing a charm over the inanimate objects by which we are surrounded, in the same manner do outward adventitious circumstances assist the fascination to which, when young and ardent, we are but too well inclined to give way.

And no *locale*, perhaps, was ever better calculated for the encouragement of such romantic feelings, than that in which Trevelyan and Theresa were now thrown together. The glowing summer's evening, when the meadows and gardens were peopled with loitering groups of pedestrians, and the river covered with gaily-freighted boats; the occasional sounds of music mingling with the splash of the waterman's oar, and lulling the soul into a delicious dream, united to form a scene bearing in itself a character of sentiment, and producing that sunshine of the mind which seems for the moment to light up our existence with an unearthly glow.

Trevelyan's imagination thus powerfully worked upon, he willingly yielded to the strong fascination of one, whose character and person, undisguised by any of those artificial decorations necessary in the world, appeared in such lovely unison with all around.

On such evenings as those here described, the little wherry was regularly seen waiting for the happy trio at the gate of Miss Trevelyan's garden, and they wandered thus for hours on the lovely Thames, till, the boats having one by one disappeared, and the busy hum of men died away, all around was stilled into the most luxurious silence; then Theresa's voice, accompanied by her guitar,

Digitized by Google

was heard to swell on the soft evening air, and as Trevelyan, leaning on his oar, gazed on the lovely living picture before him, he recklessly gave way to the enchantment of the moment.

On a delightful afternoon in the month of July 1800, the same aquatic show which had a year before made so melancholy an impression upon Miss Trevelyan's mind, came gliding down the stream, colouring the scenery with its brilliant flags and streamers. Theresa, who had from the garden spied its approach, flew to inform her two companions, and to entreat they might follow it; a boat was in consequence immediately sent for, and they were soon in pursuit of the gay flotilla.

The scene could not fail to recall to one, whose mind was so prone to reflection as Miss Trevelyan's, the feelings with which she had last beheld it from her then lonely dwelling, when it had so powerfully struck her as a representation of her own life; and, as her pious heart swelled with gratitude on comparing the melancholy of her former solitary existence with her present happiness, tears stole softly down her cheek, and she sat lost in thought, scarcely heeding her companions, or noticed by them: for Theresa was entirely engrossed by the gay spectacle before her, urging Trevelyan to use every exertion to overtake the little fleet, while he was as intently watching her animated countenance and sparkling eyes, as she endeavoured to quicken every stroke of his oar by her encouragement. At last they overtook the barges, and, carried on almost insensibly by the stream, they accompanied the crowd of boats far down the river, until discovering the lateness of the hour, Miss Trevelyan warned them to think of their return.

The sun had now long set, the breeze which had before cooled the air had died away, and when they at last turned towards home, the tide, then strong against them, made their progress so slow and so laborious, that, before long, Trevelyan, exhausted by his exertions, was obliged to shove the boat towards the shore, and, securing it with his oars, to lean upon them for rest.

"I am afraid you are quite knocked up," said Theresa, "and I wish I could help you; but I suspect my whole

Digitized by Google

strength would do little against such a stream: I will instead sing to you your favourite song of the Evening Bells, for you have really earned a reward, and I fear you have still at least two miles to pull."

Every sound was hushed; the world seemed left "to darkness and to them;" and the music, the voice, the words, the scene, were all in delicious harmony—

> "Those evening bells, those evening bells,
> How many a tale their music tells,
> Of youth and hope, and that sweet time,
> When first I heard their soothing chime!"

Theresa was still singing this stanza, when, on a sudden, the regular splash of oars broke the stillness of all around, and soon, through the twilight, there appeared one of those long funny-club wherries, well known to all who live on the banks of the Thames, and which, manned by ten or twelve amateur-watermen, seemed like a spear to cut through the water. The party came swiftly and gaily on, all talking and laughing, while their many oars striking the water at the same moment overcame every other sound.

Theresa, totally unheeding them, and engrossed by her music, continued to sing. On a sudden, one of the rowers called out, "Stop!—hush!—music!—by Heavens 'tis woman's voice, most exquisitely sweet!"

"Oh, nonsense," answered another. "It is only some common ballad-singer; come, pull on, for we shall be too late for the Opera."

"Hang the Opera," replied the first speaker. "No other music can equal that which I now hear; for Heaven's sake, hush!"

Again there was a dead silence, all resting on their oars. Theresa, through the sounds of her own voice and the guitar, had heard but little of this conversation, and continued her serenade wandering from one air to another; but Trevelyan, not choosing that any one else should enjoy that which had been intended for himself alone, and in consequent jealous displeasure at the intruding attention of the amateur-boatmen, again slipped his

Digitized by Google

oars into the water, and, pushing from the shore, proceeded homewards.

An animated conversation was immediately commenced in an under-tone among the Funny-club boatmen, and Trevelyan, not half pleased with the occurrence, although he did not exactly know why, redoubled his speed to get from them, but before long the same full plash was heard not far distant, and to his vexation he perceived that the boat had altered its course and was following them.

Theresa now observed that they were pursued, and, amused as any girl might have been at the circumstance, said, exultingly to Miss Trevelyan: "Well, at last we have fallen in with people of taste; it is the first time I have had this compliment paid to my music." Then, encouraged by the increasing darkness, she, before Miss Trevelyan had replied, or, indeed, knew very well to what she alluded, swept her hand over the strings of the guitar, and began a wild Neapolitan Barcarola.

Roused at length from her reverie, Miss Trevelyan looked towards the pursuing boat, and, being now fully aware of what was passing, she was not less discomposed than her brother, on finding that they were at so late an hour the object of attraction to a party of young men who were at the moment evidently much elevated in spirits. She therefore gently laid her hand on Theresa's, and bade her desist.

"Why! what is the matter?" exclaimed Theresa.

"Nothing," replied Miss Trevelyan in a low voice. "Only we need not any longer entice those gentlemen out of their way."

"Oh! that is their affair," said Theresa, gaily, "if they think my music worth the trouble, I am sure they are very welcome to it; and she carelessly struck some notes on her instrument.

Miss Trevelyan again took hold of her hand. "Really, Treevy," said Theresa, in a tone of expostulation, "I do not see what harm they do us; and surely I can be doing none either, by merely serenading them, when they seem so fond of music, and when, from the darkness it is impossible they can ascertain who is singing, for I may say, like Juliet to Romeo,

Digitized by Google

'Thou knowest the mask of night is on my face,
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek.'"

During this little altercation between his two companions, Trevelyan, who grew every moment more and more discomposed, forgetting his fatigue, redoubled his speed, fighting against the stream with an energy which love, or, perhaps, more properly, jealousy, could at that moment alone have given him; but the faster he went, the faster the boat, like a phantom, flew after him, and did not give up the chase, until they had passed the bridge, and were within fifty yards of the landing-place.

Another altercation then apparently took place between the boat's crew. As they all talked at once, Trevelyan could not make out the particular point then in debate; but the words "nonsense!"—"what a strange fancy!" and the name of *Leslie*, often repeated, caught his ear; and when at last this hubbub ceased, the boat, to his infinite satisfaction, was again turned towards London, and soon after disappeared.

But as it left them he saw, through the deepening twilight, a tall, white figure standing above the rest, and a handkerchief waved, as if in farewell. Theresa, who had been excessively amused by this little adventure, seemed rather surprised that her guardian was not equally so; and, for the first time, was half inclined to consider him as unjust and severe for condemning, as he did, the conduct of the musical waterman as impertinent, and the point was pretty warmly argued between them on leaving the boat.

Theresa, who was not much used to contradiction from any one, and still less from Trevelyan, immediately on rejoining his sister in the house, applied to her as umpire. "Surely, Treevy," said she, "you will not be so severe as my guardian, and condemn these poor gentlemen, merely for having gone a few yards out of their course to listen to music."

"If they were gentlemen," said Miss Trevelyan, "I do condemn them, as they must have seen Frederick did not like their pursuit; if they were merely London shopkeepers, which I suspect, then one can't expect them to

Digitized by Google

know better, as they would probably mistake their impertinence for gallantry."

"Oh, I am *sure* they were *gentlemen*," said Theresa eagerly; shopkeepers would never have had so much taste: at all events I hope, whoever they are, they will not be punished for their impertinence by being too late for the Opera, and even you, I am sure, would not be so cruel as to wish that," added she, smiling archly in her guardian's face. He made no reply, and there the matter ended.

Early next morning Trevelyan was obliged to go to London on business, not of his own, but of Colonel Howard's, or, rather of Theresa's; for, owing to the illness of his confidential solicitor, he had never yet been able to look into his friend's affairs. He found, on examining his papers, that he bequeathed to his only child, Theresa Howard, fifteen thousand pounds, in short, nearly every thing he possessed, a sum far exceeding Trevelyan's expectations for her. In the codicil to his will, dated a week before his death, Colonel Howard directed that his daughter should not marry until she was eighteen, when she was to be considered of age with regard to her property, but that even then, she was to form no matrimonial alliance without the full consent and approbation of her guardian, Colonel Frederick Trevelyan.

Trevelyan started when those words met his eyes, and he read the sentence several times over, although hardly forming a clear idea to himself why this injunction so particularly, indeed so painfully, attracted his attention; but so it did, leaving a disagreeable though vague impression on his mind, which he was unable to shake off; and his spirits or his temper, or whatever it was that had been affected by these details of law, did not improve on finding that, from some legal forms and difficulties which he had not anticipated, it became absolutely necessary that he should remain for some days longer in town. The bright smiles with which Theresa welcomed him, on his return home, fully made up to him, however, for all his previous vexation.

"We have been quite in a fuss about you," said she,

Digitized by Google

as she kindly went up to him, "and we have been so dull, for Treevy would not let me go on with our book, as she said it would not be fair upon you; and really the evenings appeared so very long, that even I was ready to go to bed. Oh! but I must tell you," she added, laughing, "I have charmed another boatman! for we went yesterday evening—as you know we had promised to do, by water to Twickenham, to fetch Sir Henry and Lady Williams, who insisted on having some music; and soon after I began to sing, a boat with a gentleman and a most beautiful Newfoundland dog appeared, as Sir Henry said in chase, following us the whole time, and I am *quite* sure this admirer of my singing was a *gentleman*, whatever our friends of the Funny-club wherry were: so I really begin to think that the inhabitants of Richmond are not quite so dull a set as I had imagined."

This newly discovered musical turn among the young gentlemen of the neighborhood did not appear to be matter of so much rejoicing to Trevelyan as to his ward; but, ashamed of his jealous wish to monopolize Theresa's talent to himself, and at all events ashamed that she should discover it, he turned the matter off as a good joke, and no more was then said upon the subject.

But, from that time, scarcely an evening did he and his two companions take their usual lounge on the river, but the little skiff with the handsome young man and the large Newfoundland dog appeared: and yet, although their boat was evidently the object of attraction, the unknown waterman so contrived to cross the stream to and fro, at one moment darting off in a totally opposite direction, at another, as if by mere accident or awkwardness, crossing their track, and entangling his oars with their's, that it became equally impossible to elude or to resent his attendance.

All this time no notice was taken either by Theresa or her guardian of this new aquatic knight-errant, perhaps in consequence of their former little quarrel on the subject; but before long the latter began to fancy he could detect a conscious blush on his ward's face whenever he joined them, as if she was aware of being the object which attracted him, and that her eyes wandered

Digitized by Google

anxiously around on those evenings when he did not appear. Trevelyan often longed to put a stop to her singing; but, without more positive reasons than he could allege, he felt that such a prohibition would seem most arbitrary and capricious, when he had hitherto himself been the first to encourage her music as so delightful an addition to their evening excursions; but he ceased entirely to apply for his favourite songs; he never, as formerly, entreated to have them again and again repeated; often discovered that it was cold or threatened rain, when scarcely a cloud was to be seen in the sky, and heartily rejoiced when the shortened days and consequent change of weather necessarily terminated their customary, and once so delightful, aquatic expeditions.

CHAPTER V.

Let no one say that there is need
Of time for love to grow;
Ah no! the love that kills *indeed*,
Despatches at a blow. FIRST LOVE.

THUS passed the summer, and with it seemed to disappear the unknown waterman and his dog. Towards the end of autumn, Lord Launceston, who since his nephew's return from India, had made great advances of civility towards him, wrote to propose that he and Miss Trevelyan should come and pay him a visit in Cornwall, where he promised they should meet with that cordial reception both from himself and his daughter, which their near relationship gave them a right to expect, and the Colonel, in addition, would find most excellent shooting, as few could boast of such capital moors and such an abundance of game as himself.

To this letter of Lord Launceston's was subjoined a pretty pink note from Lady Augusta to her cousin, containing the like pressing invitation; but Theresa was not

Digitized by Google

named by either the father or daughter. The matter was of course fully discussed between Colonel Trevelyan and his sister. The latter was particularly anxious that these friendly advances on the part of their relatives should be met by equal cordiality on theirs; but still, with regard to herself, feeling quite unequal to the exertion of a visit to Trevelyan Castle, and Theresa not being included in the invitation, she at last decided on making her excuses, alleging as her reasons recent indisposition, and not liking to be long absent from home on account of her young charge.

"But," added she, "really Frederick you should go, and, indeed, I think a little variety of society and occupation will be good both for your mind and body, for I must confess the life you lead here must be dull enough."

Trevelyan could not help smiling at his supposed dullness; he in theory quite agreed with his sister with regard to the propriety of showing all willingnesss to meet their uncle's advances of kindness, and thus putting an end to the unfortunate estrangement which had so long existed between them; but, in practice, he in truth felt no greater inclination to visit his relations and the partridges than Miss Trevelyan; however, as he hardly acknowledged to himself his true reasons for objecting to the proposed absence from Richmond, he could not urge them to his sister, still less name them to his uncle as an excuse for declining his friendly offers; therefore, after many doubts and much discussion on the subject, he was obliged, however reluctantly, to express his thanks to his uncle, and his readiness to obey his kind summons in ten days.

It is to be feared that, when writing this necessary falsehood, many a murmur trembled on his lips at being thus obliged to forego the society of one whose power over his heart was every day encreasing, for that of relations towards whom he did not feel particularly attracted, and that he heartily wished all the poor hares and pheasants had been safely lodged in his satanic majesty's larder instead of being held out as irresistible temptations to Trevelyan Castle during the shooting season.

Previously to his departure from Richmond, Trevelyan

Digitized by Google

found it necessary again to pass a day in town with Colonel Howard's lawyers for the final arrangement of his daughter's affairs. He had as yet never mentioned the subject to her, but, the legal part of the business being now concluded, he determined on informing Theresa of her father's liberal settlements in her behalf, and of the degree of authority which, by the wishes of that father, he, as his representative, was to claim over her actions. Accordingly, finding himself alone with her the morning after his return to Richmond, he, with a beating heart, gave his ward a detailed account of her worldly prospects.

Even when listening to these details, Theresa was scarcely sensible of the full extent of her father's munificence towards her, being little aware of the value of such worldly possessions; but the kindness which must have prompted such generosity was easily to be understood by one gifted with such liveliness of feeling, and her silent but eloquent tears expressed the gratitude of her heart for such proofs of affection in her deceased parent.

Trevelyan then continued. "I need not tell you that your father's relations are not favourably inclined towards you, for that you know already; and this disposition of his property chiefly in your favour has not certainly tended to soften their feelings: during all this business I have of course been brought in contact with Colonel Howard's nephew, and we had several conversations relative to you, but I am sorry to say the result has been a conviction on my part that we must hope for no change of sentiment either in him or his family. But, thank Heaven! you are independent of their kindness in one way, and, I trust, the *permanent* home which I am empowered by my sister to offer you under her roof will in some measure compensate for the want of generosity in your more natural connexions."

Trevelyan paused—gazing in compassion on his agitated auditor, for, during this part of his discourse, Theresa's colour had varied from white to crimson, and she had bit her lips, as if to restrain the tears of wounded pride, which forced themselves into her eyes. But, notwithstanding all her efforts, the large drops followed each

Digitized by Google

other down her cheeks, as she sat immoveable, listening to his narrative, and evidently too much overpowered by various contending feelings to venture to speak.

"I have one thing more to say," continued Trevelyan, with much emotion; "by your father's will, you are to be considered of age upon attaining your eighteenth year, which you will do, I find, next April, that is to say, you are then to be mistress of your fortune, but not even then entirely released from my authority with regard to your actions, for—" and he drew a long breath in order to secure the power of reaching the end of his sentence—"for you must not marry without my full consent."

Theresa, smiling through her tears, looked up into her guardian's face, and holding out her hand to him, "I hope," said she, "you will not find me inclined to be very rebellious to your wishes on that or any other point."

Trevelyan's whole frame trembled with emotion—these words had roused his secret from the very bottom of his heart—the precious gift of her hand, which Theresa seemed thus voluntarily to make him, caused his every sense to swim in a confusion of hope and delight, and, before he knew what he was about, tenderly pressing that hand between both of his, "O Theresa!" said he, "I fear it will at any time go hard with me to be obliged to give up to another my present delegated right over your destiny, and to relinquish this dear hand to one, who can never, I am sure, prize it half so much as myself."

Theresa again looked at him, but blushing and embarrassed; her confusion seemed to recall him to his senses. "Do not speak to me," he continued in a hurried manner: "I ask, I wish for no answer—only to be allowed to think it possible—that, perhaps—at some future time you may—at all events, forgive me if, for a moment, I have so far forgotten myself as to have said—what I should not—what is nonsense—forget it all—and still look upon me as your guardian—your brother—your father even—in short, let me be to you whatever will inspire you with most confidence, most entire trust—and again forgive me."

"Forgive you!" said Theresa, with an innocent artlessness of look and manner quite peculiar to herself; "I

Digitized by Google

am sure it is I who have to ask forgiveness of you, for not being half deserving of your and dear Treevy's goodness, for sitting here like a statue, without even attempting one word of thanks for kindness such as no poor outcast ever yet met with. But I really cannot—it is all too much for words—I can only hope my conduct may prove my gratitude,"—and again seizing her guardian's hand, she hid her agitated face in the back of the couch, upon which they were together seated. Was it wrong, if Trevelyan then ventured to draw her towards him, and to kiss the hand still clasped in his!

Whether right or wrong, however, so it was—and Theresa appeared to have that entire reliance in her guardian, to love him with such a confiding sisterly affection, that these expressions of tenderness on his part neither surprised nor offended her. Perhaps, on reflection, Trevelyan would have been better pleased, had she appeared startled or even angry; but still he was too supremely happy at the moment to think of aught beyond it; and never did a guardian and ward part better friends, after a discussion of their reciprocal rights and obligations.

When they next met after this conversation, Theresa slightly blushed, as her eyes encountered Trevelyan's, but, that first moment of awkwardness once over, it seemed as if what had passed between them had produced no other effect upon her than that of increasing, if possible, her feelings of gratitude and affection towards her guardian and Miss Trevelyan, from whose lips she received the confirmation of those kind offers previously made in her name.

There remained but one more day for Trevelyan to pass at Richmond before he was to set out for Cornwall, and, not wishing to lose any of Theresa's society, when on the eve of being entirely deprived of it, he proposed to her to walk with him to Twickenham, whither he was going to take leave of Sir Henry Williams. Theresa, delighted at the proposal, flew to Miss Trevelyan to obtain her permission to accept it, who, seeing in the connexion between her two companions nothing more than that of guardian and ward, unhesitatingly gave her con-

Digitized by Google

sent to the *tête-à-tête* walk, and in consequence, Theresa and Trevelyan, accompanied by little Oscar, set off on their expedition, each in their different way with high anticipations of pleasure. We will, however, venture to say that Trevelyan's were the highest, as alone with Theresa, her arm linked within his, he felt his precious charge to be in a manner his own property.

They had not proceeded far beyond the bridge, when, an enormous Newfoundland dog rushing suddenly past them, knocked over poor little Oscar, and sent him rolling in the dust. Although nature had given him a diminutive person, and also no small share of that antipathy to bodily pain of which the great and little are equally sensible, yet Oscar had a mighty mind whenever the resentment of injuries called forth its powers, and, no sooner had he recovered his equilibrium than he flew in impotent rage on his unknown enemy, who with one touch of his gigantic paw pinned him to the ground, where he lay prostrate, yelling most piteously. Theresa, quick as lightning, darted forward to rescue the poor little animal, Trevelyan as quickly following her. At the same moment a horseman galloped up; he leaped from his saddle, and, seizing the dog by the collar, in an instant liberated the terrified prisoner.

Theresa, without even looking towards the deliverer, caught up Oscar in her arms, and was wholly occupied examining his supposed wounds, while Trevelyan, satisfied that he had received no material injury, turned good-humouredly towards the horseman to assure him no harm was done, and to express their thanks for his interference; but his feelings and countenance in an instant underwent a total change, for, to his infinite vexation, he immediately recognised in the person before him the unknown waterman who had, by his constant attendance, night after night, so annoyed him all the summer on the river. The gentlemen both bowed, and the horseman apologised for the uncivil behaviour of his four-footed companion, rejoicing that the little dog had not suffered in the unequal combat. While speaking, his eyes were fixed on Theresa with evident looks of admiration, and he seemed much disposed to prolong the parley, but Tre-

Digitized by Google

velyan, who was of a totally different mind, again hastily thanking him for his prompt assistance, coldly bowed, wishing him a good morning. This was a terrible broad hint, and the stranger did not attempt to conceal his vexation at being thus abruptly dismissed; but, as Trevelyan had then turned from him, he seemed to think it impossible to renew the conversation, and gathering up the reins of his horse's bridle, he was preparing to remount, when Theresa, who had during all this time been entirely occupied examining and caressing Oscar, satisfied at length that he was unhurt, happened to look up. Her eyes encountered those of the stranger, and instantly recognising the knight of the little skiff, she blushed deeply as she returned his salutation.

The whole of this transaction had occupied scarcely two minutes, but they had appeared as many hours to Trevelyan, who, hastily drawing Theresa's arm within his, and again making an inclination of the head to the stranger, walked on with his charge. They continued some little time in silence, but soon the galloping of the horse, and the barking of the large dog were again heard approaching, and Theresa, suddenly disengaging herself from her guardian, caught up Oscar in her arms. On reaching them the rider checked his speed, and pointing to a string which he had fastened to his dog's neck, assured Theresa that her little favourite was quite safe from further danger, as his antagonist was secured.

Theresa smiled, while Trevelyan, provoked at this renewal of intercourse, again formally bowed to the stranger, who, after another eager gaze at his lovely companion, putting spurs to his horse was soon out of sight.

"I wonder who that can be!" said Theresa, after a silence of some moments; "perhaps we might have seen his name on the dog's collar, for I saw a large brass plate upon it."

"If you are so very anxious for information on the subject," said Trevelyan, dryly, "we can call the gentleman back, and ask himself, for he can only be flattered by Miss Howard's interest."

"Oh! my curiosity does not quite amount to that," said Theresa, somewhat pettishly; and they again walk-

Digitized by Google

ed on in silence, both more occupied with this little occurrence than either chose to confess—Theresa hardly owning to herself the fact, that she felt flattered by the stranger's evident wish to make her acquaintance, and Trevelyan not liking to acknowledge that this very obvious desire on his part was displeasing to him. To quarrel with Theresa was, however, not what Trevelyan was used to, besides, he felt he had been to blame in giving way to a degree of ill-humour, which she certainly had done nothing to deserve, and in his noble mind the sense of error could not long exist without prompting its confession.

Taking, therefore, courage at last to break the unusual silence, which had for so many minutes existed between them, "Theresa," said he, "you must think me horribly cross to-day—and in truth I am so—everybody, and every thing annoys me—however, my feeling so particularly unpleasant to myself is no excuse for my being so to others, and least of all to you," said he, fixing his eyes fondly upon her, "so if I beg pardon, and promise to behave better all the rest of this day, will you generously forgive me?"

"Indeed," said she, laughing, "I am delighted to see my guardian can at times be even as naughty as his ward, and I suspect we are after all but quits—so let us be friends;" and as she spoke, she gently pressed the arm she had hold of.

Trevelyan's eyes glistened with delight, as he gazed on her radiant countenance; and yet a feeling of disappointment shot across his heart, at her *naïve* expression of kindness, for, thought he—and he was right—a young girl does not venture to press the arm of the man she loves, but it is thus a grateful sister speaks the affectionate feelings of her heart to a brother, in whom she implicitly confides. He drew a deep sigh, and after a few moments' pause, continued: "It is this expedition to Cornwall which has, I believe, put me so out of sorts, as I do not care one farthing about shooting, and I am very sure the society I shall find at Trevelyan Castle will not be half as agreeable to me as that which I shall leave behind."

"No?" said Theresa, smiling; "why you forget you

Digitized by Google

will have the all-perfect Right Honourable Lady Augusta Trevelyan, who never says or does a wrong thing, instead of the thoughtless, ignoble ——." Theresa stopped short. "Instead of her whose very faults are dearer to me than all my cousin's perfection," replied Trevelyan, with vehemence.

Luckily for him they at this moment reached Sir Henry Williams's residence, the door of which he would probably have passed, had not Theresa checked his progress, for the prospect of his approaching separation from her had so moved his heart, that his thoughts and feelings were scarcely under control, and in another minute his secret would possibly have again escaped from him unawares. Sir Henry and Lady Williams were at home, and both joined in lamentations on hearing of the purport of Trevelyan's visit.

"But we will take care of your ladies," said the good-humoured Baronet; "you have only to appoint me your deputy, and I will look after your ward during your absence, I promise you." Then, drawing Trevelyan aside, "Really! my dear Colonel," said he laughing, "I think my friend Howard must have been quite doting, when he could think of appointing *you* guardian to his daughter! a pretty sort of guardian, faith!" and he looked cunningly into Trevelyan's face, while he kindly patted him on the shoulder: "but make your mind easy, I promise you no one shall carry her off while you are away."

Trevelyan coloured to his very forehead, and yet could not help feeling half gratified by Sir Henry's raillery. It seemed almost to give a reality to his wishes, to embody his vague dreams of happiness. "Ay, ay, we will look after your ladies," continued his friend, "and I do not think they could do better than come and eat a family dinner with us while you are absent; I am sure your sister would be all the better for being a little routed from home, and if she persists in shutting herself up in this manner, why we must expect all the old ladies of Richmond again to begin their gossiping," and Sir Henry laughed heartily at the recollection of the former tale of scandal invented against her. "And as for poor Miss

Digitized by Google

Howard," he continued, "surely you do not wish to lock her up entirely?"

"Quite the contrary," said Trevelyan; "I am particularly anxious that she should mix in society, and make herself friends; and I assure you no mark of kindness you feel disposed to show my young charge will be thrown away upon her."

"Nor on *you* either, my good friend," rejoined Sir Henry, again looking facetiously at him; "am I not right, hey! I have a sharp eye for such things—but cheer up," he added, perceiving his companion look a little grave, "faint heart never won fair lady, and you know none but the brave deserve the fair; so courage! and now, since it seems you must go," for he saw Trevelyan about to depart, "Good bye—take care of yourself! and make haste back to your post for fear of accidents while you are off guard."

Theresa, who had been engaged all this time in conversation with Lady Williams, and who in consequence had heard none of Sir Henry's remarks, again took her guardian's arm in artless ignorance of the favour she was conferring upon him; and meeting with no more knights-errant, or Newfoundland dogs, they and their friend Oscar reached home in safety.

When Trevelyan that night closed the piano-forte, after a delightful evening spent at Theresa's side listening to her voice, he renewed his lamentations at his departure. "Oh! but again remember your cousin, Lady Augusta, will sing and play to you," said Theresa; "for of course she has been taught to do every thing, and as you have the honour to be her near relation, and are consequently worthy of her notice, she will be prodigiously civil to you. As for poor me," continued Theresa, the colour mounting to her cheeks, and tears starting into her eyes, "who am nobody and nothing ——."

She was proceeding with her invectives, but Miss Trevelyan, playfully covering her mouth with her hand, stopped her, saying with a smile, "I can tell you what you are—a very saucy girl for laughing in this manner at my relations, and since Frederick has not the gal-

Digitized by Google

lantry to defend Augusta, I must. I will allow she is a little cold in her manners at first, but I believe her to be a very sensible person and an excellent good daughter."

"Oh! I dare say she is very *good*," replied Theresa, "and that is the very reason why she is so disagreeable; indeed, I never can understand why there is such a fuss made about people being good, when after all nobody thinks them a bit the pleasanter for being so, but the contrary; and as for sense, that is only another word for dulness: in short, I know no one who contrives to be both good and pleasant but my dear Treevy," and so saying, throwing her arms round her friend's neck, she gave her a hearty embrace.

However little Theresa's levity might on reflection be approved of by Miss Trevelyan, she could not chide one who always disarmed her by the most irresistible expressions of affection; and as for Trevelyan, whose partial eyes saw only the bright side of Theresa's character, every trait that showed her heart made his own overflow with such rapture, that he would scarcely allow even of the shadow of blame, and again more vehemently than before murmured at cruel fate for separating him from one, whose society became daily more necessary to his happiness.

Thrice did John the following morning come puffing up stairs to inform Trevelyan that the chaise was quite ready, for so much time elapsed after each notification, without its being followed by his master's appearance, that clock-work punctual old John, judging by himself, and lamenting over the Colonel's premature deafness, thought he could not have heard him. At the third notice, which was in consequence made in a high-pitched tone, and close to Trevelyan's ear, he started up, and, after taking leave at least a dozen times, he at last departed, waving farewells from the chaise window as long as he could still catch a glimpse of the object of all his hopes, and even of the house which contained her.

Theresa could not but regret the loss of her guardian's society. She missed him in every occupation and amusement. In him she had lost a champion in all her little disputes with Treevy, and a companion in her walks and

Digitized by Google

rides, and she was again reduced to the dull chaperonship of Humphries. This sad blank occasioned by his absence she so touchingly deplored in the cover of one of Miss Trevelyan's letters to her brother, that, encouraged by his wishes, and interpreting her expression into something far beyond their real meaning, he fearlessly gave way to the most delightful anticipations for the future, and did not attempt to check those hopes which by indulgence were growing into certainties. The unknown waterman was in consequence entirely dismissed from his thoughts, and the only drawback to his present felicity was the necessity of still enduring three more weeks of exile at Trevelyan Castle.

About ten days after Trevelyan's departure from Richmond, the proposed dinner at Sir Henry Williams's took place. This being the very first time Theresa had ever dined out, she naturally raised her anticipations of pleasure high, and went in that flurry of expectation which the young ever feel on entering the world, until they have learned the sad truth that disappointment follows them even to a dinner-party. To Miss Trevelyan it was nearly as great an event as to her young companion; but her feelings were necessarily of a less pleasurable nature, and, had she allowed *self* to preponderate she would probably never have accepted Lady Williams's invitation; but her chastened mind viewed every circumstance of her life in the light of moral discipline, and, resolving for Theresa's sake to overcome the dislike to society, which the misfortune of her person had occasioned, she made up her mind to the mortification of her own situation, and, turning her whole attention to the indulgence of her young friend, abandoned even her toilette to her care, and set out on the expedition, determining to please by being herself pleased.

On their arrival at Sir Henry Williams's, they were shown into a room where several persons were collected, but where *darkness* was alone "*visible*," for it was now the beginning of October, that time of year when there is still a struggle between the seasons, and candles are deferred as long as possible, as indicating too positively the approach of winter; the apartment being, therefore, only

Digitized by Google

lighted by the crimson cloud which reflected the sun's last ray, it was nearly impossible to distinguish the features of those assembled, particularly of the gentlemen, who stood at a little distance. Introductions of course took place, but the names of those presented, were as unknown to Miss Trevelyan and Theresa as their persons; among them, however, was one which immediately caught the ear of the latter, as she remembered to have heard it before, although she could not at once recollect when or where. It was Leslie, and it at last struck her that this was the very name which had been so often repeated by the disputing watermen, on the evening of the gay regatta, which evening had been rendered memorable to Theresa by her subsequent dispute with her guardian.

Dinner was before long announced, and one of the gentlemen offering Theresa his arm, she followed the rest of the company into the adjoining room, where chance placed her next but one to Lady Williams. The instant she got into the light curiosity led her eagerly to look at her companion, but the examination of his features afforded no further insight as to his identity, not having ever seen them before, and she turned towards her other neighbour expecting the same unsatisfactory result. But at the very first glance she actually started on her seat, and with difficulty repressed an exclamation of surprise, for she immediately recognised the knight of the little skiff—Oscar's deliverer!

She blushed even more deeply than at their first meeting in the high road, and deeper still from the consciousness that he must have observed her heightened colour, as she had found his eyes fixed upon her. The sight of Theresa's lovely face, now brought to light by the glare of lamps and candles, did not appear, however, to occasion equal *surprise* to her neighbour, although by the expression of his countenance, his satisfaction at having her placed next to him was very evident: he lost no time in claiming acquaintance with her, immediately referring to their former meeting on the high road, and the adventure of the little dog, as introductory subjects to further intimacy.

"Who can he be?" thought Theresa, "so good-looking, with so distinguished an appearance, and apparently an

Digitized by Google

inhabitant of the place from our so frequently meeting him!" Her ears kept strict watch in order to catch her neighbour's name, and she did not remain long in suspense; for, Sir Henry having soon after occasion to attract the stranger's attention, he addressed him as Lord Herbert Leslie. At the name of Leslie she was again startled, and, following her first impulse, she turned hastily towards him, but as quickly averted her eyes, for to her no small embarrassment they again met his. "Lord Herbert Leslie!" she repeated to herself: "can he possibly, by some odd chance, be the Leslie of the Funny-club wherry? that amateur waterman, who had on the evening of the City barge show, pursued their boat so far out of his course, notwithstanding all the angry remonstrances of his companions, and whose conduct on the occasion both Miss Trevelyan and her guardian had condemned so severely, as unlike that of a gentleman. "They were, however, wrong in one thing," thought Theresa; "Lord Herbert Leslie is, at all events, no shopkeeper,"—nor could she think any one of his appearance could ever be wanting in good manners." She longed to know whether her conjectures relative to him were correct or not, and, notwithstanding her friend's condemnation of the music-loving boatman, she could not help hoping—although she did not very well know why—that he, the master of the Newfoundland dog, and her present companion, might all prove to be the self-same person.

The instant she had formed this wish, the image of her guardian crossed her mind; a strange sensation of remorse shot through her heart, and she looked almost fearfully towards Miss Trevelyan, as if dreading lest she might have read her thoughts. Theresa found her friend's eyes fixed upon her, and the remark which she was about to address to Lord Herbert, with a view of ascertaining whether he was the person she suspected him to be, died on her lips—but he was too agreeable and engrossing a companion to allow her mind long to dwell on her absent guardian, or indeed, on any subject not suggested by himself. For, perfectly conscious of his powers of captivation, and knowing well how to use them, he now collected them in full force, and directed

Digitized by Google

the whole battery against Theresa, who was ill-prepared to withstand such an attack.

Few could resist the liveliness of Lord Herbert's wit; and, although some might have condemned his conversation as uncharitable, still fewer perhaps could withstand certain looks and expressions, which, appearing to raise the favoured person addressed above all possibility of being involved in the ridicule so freely bestowed on every one else, seemed at once to establish a sort of freemasonry between him and the object of his attention, upon the ground of a mutual discovery of superiority in thought and feeling.

The two hours spent in the dining-room flew by, Theresa hardly knew how, and the look with which Lord Herbert took leave of her, on Lady Williams's signal for departure, plainly told it would not be his fault if he was not soon again at her side. Theresa's spirits were so extraordinarily excited that she felt bewildered; and on their return to the library, instead of instantly joining her friend to impart to her the little observations to which so new a scene might naturally have given rise, she wandered, alone and pre-occupied, round the apartment, carelessly turning over the publications and drawings scattered about. Miss Trevelyan, surprised at her unusual abstraction, at last came up to her.

"You seem much occupied with that book before you," said she; "what is it?"

"Oh, nothing!" replied Theresa, instantly closing it, and with an evident desire that her studies might not be inquired into, replacing it with its companions on the table. The book in question was merely the first volume of Debrett's Peerage—a most innocent study certainly; but being one which, notwithstanding its generally allowed interest, had never before excited any in Theresa, she did not care to avow why it had now so suddenly attracted her attention, nor, indeed, could she, perhaps, have even explained to herself the precise reason why she had thus eagerly seized upon it. "You seemed to have a great deal of agreeable conversation at dinner," continued Miss Trevelyan; "who were your companions?"

"Oh! I don't know; that is to say, I believe one was

Digitized by Google

Lord Herbert"—the surname "Leslie," came lagging after, as she was unwilling at once to let Miss Trevelyan suspect he might possibly be the condemned member of the Funny-club party.

"Oh! yes, I know it was Lord Herbert Leslie who sat between you and Lady Williams; but who was on your left hand?"

"I really can't tell," replied Theresa, and she spoke true, for she had never noticed her other neighbour, and had at last totally forgotten his existence. Just then Lord Herbert entered: Miss Trevelyan was called away, and he was again fixed at Theresa's side.

Various amusements—whist, billiards, chess, ecarté were proposed to him in succession by Sir Henry Williams, but objected to them all, professing the most entire ignorance of, and profound abhorrence for, all games, whether of chance or skill.

"That's new, I think, my Lord," said Sir Henry, looking slyly at him. "I have heard that no one can beat you, either at billiards or ecarté; and as for games of chance, you seem to me to understand them so well, that they become certainties in your hands, and it really is not fair to come among us and carry off the stake in this manner, without allowing any one else even to try his luck."

Lord Herbert did not seem willing to understand Sir Henry's remark; he made no comment upon it, and merely said, "Pray don't think about me, I am perfectly content without any amusement; but if I were to say what I prefer to every thing else, I should name music."

"I dare say Miss Howard is musical."

"I *know* she is," he added, but in so low a voice, that Theresa alone could catch the words, and the crimson blush which instantly suffused her face betrayed that she had not only *heard*, but *understood* him! Again the image of her guardian flashed across her mind, and she could almost have fancied she felt his dark eyes fixed on her burning cheeks.

"Why is this?" thought she; "why am I so tormented with the idea of Colonel Trevelyan's dissatisfaction, merely because I talk with Lord Herbert Leslie? why

Digitized by Google

was he from the very first so evidently displeased with his attendance upon us?—why did he so carefully avoid making his acquaintance? for certainly, on that day of Oscar's adventure with his dog, he was almost rude to him—could he be aware of any thing to his disadvantage? and yet how is that possible, when, from his rank and situation in life, Lord Herbert must be so well known—when too he is a welcome guest at Sir Henry Williams's, and, besides, so gentleman-like—so agreeable!

All these self-convincing arguments in favour of her new acquaintance Theresa repeated over and over to herself, but still she could not entirely dismiss from her mind a feeling of doubt and anxiety, and a consciousness that, had her guardian been present, he would not have been pleased at her sudden and great intimacy with the unknown waterman.

Again and again Lord Herbert renewed his petition for music, and Sir Henry, wishing perhaps to put an end to the tête-à-tête on the sofa, added his entreaties, so that at last Theresa thought it best to comply, and repaired to the pianoforte. She found that Lord Herbert knew all her songs by heart—hummed the airs—repeated the words. "There is one you have not yet sung," said he, smiling significantly; "the Neapolitan Barcarola"—that was the song with which she had serenaded the party in the Funny-club wherry on the evening of their little adventure with them on the river.

She could now no longer doubt his being the person who had thus in various ways haunted them during the whole summer, and the conviction occasioned much the same sort of feeling of shyness, amounting to shame, which is experienced by one, who having, beneath the concealment of a mask, ventured on liberties of speech which in *propria persona* would never have been hazarded, is at length obliged, by throwing off the disguise, to betray the culprit.

"What a delicious evening *that* was!" exclaimed Lord Herbert. "By heavens I shall never forget the 20th of July, nor the effect of the sounds which I that night first heard.

Digitized by Google

"'Twas not the air, 'twas not the words
But the deep magic in the chords,
And in the lips, that gave such power
As music knew not till that hour.'"

Theresa had begun the accompaniment of the Barcarola, but found it quite impossible to attempt singing it, and continued in silence modulating on the instrument without even venturing to look at her companion, whose eyes were fixed on her beautiful face, in evident satisfaction at the embarrassment which it betrayed.

The announcement of Miss Trevelyan's carriage soon relieved Theresa from her awkward situation. Lord Herbert most vehemently seconded Sir Henry and Lady Williams's remonstrances against so early a departure; but Miss Trevelyan, little used to society, was so much fatigued, that she could not be prevailed upon to remain any longer, and Lord Herbert was at last obliged to give up the attempt, and be content with securing to himself the privilege of escorting Theresa to the door.

While, to prolong the time, he was turning her cloak in every possible direction but the right one, Sir Henry (as great an adept in such little *ruses de guerre* as himself) hurrying back from depositing Miss Trevelyan in her carriage, met the loitering pair in the hall, and good-humouredly pushing aside Lord Herbert, "Come, come, my Lord," said he, "I am master in this house, and therefore still claim prior right to the young ladies, as well as to the old; so give up Miss Howard to me, for I have something to say to her," and drawing Theresa's relinquished arm within his, "Ah! you naughty little flirt," he continued in a low voice, "if I had been aware of all this, I never should have allowed you to come here to-day. What account am I to give of you to the guardian, hey! I who have pledged myself for your good conduct, shall I tell him that 'when the cat's away the mice do play?'" Then chuckling in much enjoyment at the embarrassment he had occasioned, and good-humouredly shaking her by the hand, he added, "Come, I will this once keep your secret, if you will promise to behave better the next time you are let out of your cage."

Digitized by Google

Theresa forcibly withdrew her hand, and, darting forward, sprang hastily into the carriage in order to avoid any further raillery. "Well, well," said Sir Henry, again laughing, "I see you are penitent, so I will be mum;" and then, hoping neither of the ladies would be the worse for the dissipation of the evening, he kindly gave them his blessing, and returned into the house.

"What is this good joke betwen you and Sir Henry?" inquired Miss Trevelyan, when they set off on their return home.

"Oh! nothing—nonsense," replied Theresa, not at all inclined to enter into any explanation of that, which, undefined as it might have seemed to any one else, she comprehended but too well.

"May I guess what Sir Henry was scolding you for?" said Miss Trevelyan, taking Theresa's hand; "did he not accuse a certain friend of mine of being too much engrossed by her neighbour at dinner?"

Theresa made no reply; and it was luckily too dark for the tales told by her blushing face to be observed.

"I recollect now," continued Miss Trevelyan, "that Lord Herbert Leslie is the person whom we used to see all summer rowing about on the river; he does not seem to have lost his taste for music, nor has that same friend of mine her's for admiration! Come, come, Theresa," said her friend, kindly retaining the hand which was struggling to be released from her's, "don't be angry. I know quite well all that is very natural, and that I, who never was—never could be—an object of admiration, can be no judge of its intoxicating effects; but, perhaps, it will be as well another time not to let any one person engross your attention so entirely. People so easily obtain the character of a flirt, and none are more ready to bestow the opprobious appellation than those who entice us on to deserve it. I find Lord Herbert is a Scotchman, Lord Falkirk's son. He does not reside in this neighbourhood, and is going almost immediately to join his father in the north."

If the design of this speech was to repress certain vague flattering sensations in Theresa's breast, it had the desired effect; and yet she could not help thinking her friend might possibly be as much mistaken with regard to Lord

Digitized by Google

Herbert's object in his attentions to her, as she had been when suspecting him of being a shopkeeper. She, however, kept these thoughts to herself, and there the matter ended; for Theresa had no desire to revive a subject, which, for reasons best known to herself, she would have wished not to be discussed; and, as she therefore never again named Lord Herbert, Miss Trevelyan attaching little importance to the affair, did not allude to him either.

A couple of days after the dinner-party at Twickenham, as Theresa was taking her usual walk with Humphries, Lord Herbert suddenly galloped up; on recognising her, he immediately leapt from his horse, and walked by the side of the footpath, making many inquiries after herself, Miss Trevelyan, and the little dog. But Theresa, who felt that this conversation should not, under present circumstances, be prolonged, gave him such laconic answers, and was evidently so much embarrassed by his attendance, that he at last took the hint, and, regretting that he was not likely soon to see her again, being obliged to set off the following day for Scotland, he remounting his horse and galloped off, though not without casting many a lingering and expressive look behind.

This rencontre was not mentioned to Miss Trevelyan, and, the circumstances of her own youth having been such as to preclude her from all experience on the subject which now occupied Theresa, she had not a suspicion that the handsome agreeable stranger had left any impression whatever on her mind. She could not, indeed, avoid observing occasional fits of abstraction and apparent listlessness in her young companion, but, never having passed through the fiery ordeal herself, she attributed them merely to the want of those recreations and amusements which had necessarily ceased upon her guardian's departure; and although Theresa, notwithstanding the change of weather, spent whole hours lost in thought, gazing vacantly over the parapet-wall of their garden, on the now swollen, ruffled waters of the Thames, Miss Trevelyan took no alarm; nor ever noticed that she was eternally singing the Neapolitan Barcarola, and constantly studying the first volume of Debrett's Peerage.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VI.

Ah! wherefore should my tongue alone be mute,
When every look, and every motion tell—
So plainly tell—and will not be forbid
That I adore thee! BASIL.

THE dreadful long month of banishment in Cornwall at length expired, and, by the beginning of November, Trevelyan was again the happiest of the happy at Theresa's side, verifying the truth of that French maxim "*Que l'absence qui affaiblit les petites passions ne fait qu'augmenter les grandes,*" for he returned, if possible, more enamoured than before. Perhaps the contrast between her enthusiastic interesting character, "for ever varying, yet for ever graceful," and the Lady Augusta's well-tutored proprieties, increased the power of captivation possessed by the former. And when Theresa, conscious that she had something to conceal, received him with downcast looks and blushing cheeks, he, in blissful ignorance of the true cause of this timidity, read in her altered manner the most flattering encouragement to his wishes, and fearlessly gave way to the intoxication which such hopes produced.

Fortunately for Theresa, Sir Henry Williams, who would have been sure to betray her secret, was then absent from Twickenham; her guardian, therefore, remaining in perfect ignorance of her meeting with Lord Herbert at his house, never in any way alluded to him; so that at length, feeling secure from detection, her fears gradually died away, and her usual spirits returned; and if her conscience at times reproached her for such ungrateful reserve towards one, to whom as yet every feeling of her heart had been freely laid open, she met its accusations with the self-deceiving expostulation, "that really, after all, she had nothing to tell; for how impart to another that which was as yet without reality or name to herself. Thus weeks flew on, Theresa meanwhile

Digitized by Google

continuing to all appearance the same light-hearted being she ever was; and, if fits of thoughtfulness occasionally stole over her, casting a shade of sentiment on her lovely countenance, Trevelyan, more and more deceived, scarcely now allowed any possibility of doubt to check his happiness. Swiftly as the time passed in her society, still he murmured at its sluggishness, impatient to arrive at that blissful moment when Theresa's attainment of the age of eighteen would remove the seal which a high sense of honour had placed upon his lips.

Colonel Trevelyan's character was one of those on which such a passion as that which Theresa had inspired makes the deepest impression, and he had also reached that period in a man's life when such impressions are most indelible; for "middle age," although it had tempered, had not yet quenched

"The fiery vehemence of youth,"

and it required no peculiar acuteness of observation to detect, beneath a remarkable repose of manner,

"The will to do, the soul to dare,
The sparkling glance soon blown to fire,
Of ardent love, or headlong ire."

All the former passing fancies of his life now seemed to him like mere child's play, having but amused his imagination without ever really touching his heart, and in consequence, even amid the active duties of a military life, he had ever felt a blank, a want of object in his existence; but since he had known Theresa, all was changed, and the world wore to him a totally different aspect. If his mind turned to his profession, Theresa would then rise to his imagination as a bright beacon enticing him on to fame and glory! How valueless did the best-earned honours now appear, unless shared by some beloved object! What would they not be if shared by Theresa? And when, in his less heroic moments, his fancy turned to a quiet happy home, there again Theresa was the foremost, the only prominent object, in the captivating picture.

Digitized by Google

Trevelyan was so entirely occupied by those thoughts and feelings, that he at last could no longer conceal them from his sister. She at first actually startled at his confession, for the possibility even of such sentiments on his part had never crossed her unsuspecting mind; and, scarcely aware of the pain she was inflicting, she in cruel sober sense laid before him all her objections to what she called his strange infatuation.

"Why, my dear Frederick," said she, "Theresa is, I believe, nearly twenty years younger than yourself, and in disposition so totally different! so wild, so thoughtless! I allow that she possesses marvellous powers of captivation, for her very faults tend to increase the interest which she inspires, but still she is such a mere child, led away by every whim, that surely, if you reflect upon it, you cannot think that she could suit you as a wife, although she may amuse you as a plaything."

Trevelyan had anticipated surprise, but did not at all like the tone in which his sister now took up the business, still less to be reminded of these defects in the object of his adoration; nor was he willing to allow that the disproportion of age between them was any objection, for he maintained that it was generally allowed that ten years' seniority only brought a man on a par with his wife, and, in the case at present under consideration, a very few more years were to be added. "In short," continued he rather impatiently; "all I want to consult you about is with regard to Theresa herself, whether you think it would even be possible that she could—that she should—"

"That she should fall in love with you, you mean, dear Fred.;" interrupted Miss Trevelyan, kindly smiling upon him. "Why, really with regard to that, I cannot venture to give an opinion; it is very evident that she is most happy in your society, but then her preferring it to mine is not wonderful, and she has, you know, no other."

Miss Trevelyan suddenly stopped, for, the recollection of Lord Herbert Leslie flashing across her mind, she was on the point of informing Trevelyan of the meeting between him and his ward at Sir Henry Williams's, and of the very evident satisfaction with which she had received his attentions; but, on second thoughts, she deemed that

Digitized by Google

it would be hardly fair to mention that, which, in fact, had been merely surmise on her part, and which appeared at all events to have been but a passing whim of the moment.

Miss Trevelyan little knew that such strict silence as that maintained by Theresa on the subject is one of the most deadly symptoms of the disease called love, and that the more the patient endeavours to conceal her malady the more alarming is the case; she, therefore, being herself deceived, helped to mislead her brother the more, and as, leaning on his shoulder, she looked with sisterly pride and affection on his handsome countenance, after a moment's pause she continued: "You know, Freddy, I am an old maid—never was in love, never could have had a lover; my judgment on such matters is, therefore, perhaps not much to be trusted, moreover, it is impossible to guess at the taste of others. But still I must say, I think any one might prefer—in short, might fall in love with, you; for that, I am aware, is the point now in question; and though I could perhaps detect among these black locks of yours one or two hairs bleached by the sun of India, yet as love, we are told, is blind, he would not detect them so easily as a prying old sister: so that really, notwithstanding all the objections I have just been making, I do think if you were willing to take Theresa for better and for worse, *she*, at least, would have no cause to complain of the bargain."

On the whole, this result of his consultation with his sister was satisfactory to Trevelyan, and, having now once broken the ice, he constantly, when alone with her, reverted to the subject nearest to his heart, till at length they talked themselves into the belief that what they both so ardently wished was not only possible but even probable. For Miss Trevelyan, who doated on Theresa, although she was not, like her brother, blinded to her faults, welcomed with such pleasure the hope of seeing her young charge safe in his care, and her wild spirit properly guided by his superior sense and judgment, that she soon became as unwilling to hear of doubt or objection as himself; and Trevelyan, finding his hopes and wishes thus encouraged by those of another, allowed them

Digitized by Google

to assume a reality, which, till then, he had scarcely permitted himself to think possible.

About a fortnight after Trevelyan's arrival at Richmond, Sir Henry and Lady Williams returned to Twickenham, and in the course of a few days called upon their friends in Paragon-row. Theresa's conscience instantly tinged her cheeks with the deepest crimson on their entrance, as she feared Sir Henry might make some disclosures, which would not be very agreeable either to herself or her guardian.

"Well, Colonel," said Sir Henry, after the first salutations were over; "you see I have kept my word, and taken good care of your ward; at least, as long as I was here to watch her, she behaved tolerably well, but I will not swear that she has not been flirting with some of the smart young bargemen over the garden-wall, while I have been away; for, faith, she needs a great deal of looking after, and I really don't envy you your charge." Then going close up to Theresa, while he laid his finger on his lips, he added in a low voice, "Don't be afraid—I won't blab. If you remember the conditions, I won't forget my promise." "But what have you been about, Colonel, all this time?" he continued; "making sad havoc among the Cornish ladies and game, I suppose. As for us here, we have neither pheasants nor Philanders, hares nor heroes,—have we, Miss Howard? Sad dull place, Richmond; no such thing as a lover to be had for love or money;" and he again turned to Theresa to confirm the truth of his statement, laughing in much enjoyment at the embarrassment which his fancied wit occasioned. "By the by though, I have good news for you; there is going to be a general rising of belles and beaux, for we are forthwith to have a ball at the Star and Garter, so at least says Mrs. Hopkins; but you may not think her very good authority. My Lady, there, however, will tell you all about it, for I heard them busily discussing the matter the other day, and was very near informing against them for high treason, they all looked so mysterious and important with their *lists* and their consultations as to who *was* and was *not* to be *trusted*. Come, my Lady," said Sir Henry to his wife, "open your business."

Digitized by Google

"My business," said Lady Williams, "relates to a petition which I have to present to you all, and in which I hope Miss Howard will second me, otherwise I fear I shall have little chance of being listened to. You must know then," continued Lady Williams, "that Mrs. Hopkins's report is for once really true, for we are positively going to have a subscription-ball. It is for some charitable purpose; and in order to ensure its success, patronesses have been appointed, who are each to press into the service their own particular friends; so I am come here to beat up for recruits, and to entreat that my ball may be honoured by being the scene of Miss Howard's *début* in the gay world."

At these words, Theresa actually gave a scream of delight, and looked anxiously in Miss Trevelyan's face for her reply; but she there saw nothing encouraging to her wishes; for her friend only looked grave and shook her head. Theresa then turned with imploring eyes towards her guardian. It was impossible for him to resist those eyes; and his, therefore, also pleaded in Theresa's behalf with his sister. Still, however, Miss Trevelyan for a time resisted their joint entreaties; the very name of a public ball seemed to alarm her. She declared her utter inability to join in any such gaiety herself, and made all sorts of objections to Theresa's going without her; but at last every difficulty was most good-humouredly and patiently obviated by Lady Williams. She would herself chaperon Theresa; she would take her and bring her back in her own carriage. She answered for her not catching cold. She promised Miss Trevelyan she should not stay very late—reminded her there would be a full moon—and, in short, at last the much wished-for permission was obtained, and to the ball it was finally settled Theresa should go.

No sooner was the welcome acquiescence pronounced than Theresa flew to her dear Treevy, and then to Lady Williams, to express her gratitude by the most affectionate acknowledgments. She next, her countenance beaming with delight, turned towards her guardian.

But the moment she approached him, it seemed as if some strange nervous affection had suddenly seized both her eyes

Digitized by Google

and tongue, for she could neither speak nor look him in the face, but stood before him like a self-convicted criminal, silent and abashed. Trevelyan, who still wanted the right clue which would have fully explained his young friend's fitful variations of countenance and manner, looked at her with glistening eyes. He spoke not either, and a tender pressure of her trembling hand was his silent reply to her unuttered thanks. Whether it was a pang of remorse which at that moment brought tears into her eyes, we cannot tell, but some passing melancholy thought seemed at once to have checked the exhilaration of spirits which the prospect of the ball had at first occasioned, and, during the remainder of Lady Williams's visit, Theresa continued silent and preoccupied.

This projected gaiety, of course, caused a prodigious sensation in Richmond and its neighbourhood, where, from the great number of elderly ladies and the extreme paucity of young gentlemen, dancing was certainly neither a common, nor, (what is generally considered to be,) a *natural* amusement; but every exertion was on this occasion made both by the patronesses and subscribers to ensure the success of the ball in question, by collecting from all parts beaux, beauty, and fashion. Letters were despatched in every direction, with offers of beds and dinners to all the officers quartered within thirty miles round; and, as the entertainment was to take place during the Christmas vacation, Cambridge and Oxford students were summoned, and even Eton and Harrow boys pressed into the service—the patronesses, with laudable emulation, vying with each other as to the number and importance of the names on their several lists.

As the time approached, Mrs. Hopkins was in a constant trot, going from door to door, in order to arrange with her neighbours about the proper division of the expected young ladies and gentlemen in their respective houses and carriages, and many also were her visits to Mrs. Preston, the milliner, not only to decide upon the equally important distribution of flowers and ribbons in her own cap, but in order to ascertain beforehand what hats, turbans, and tocques were destined on that important night to decorate the heads of all her acquaintances.

Digitized by Google

She was even so good as to step into the Star and Garter, in order to give her advice *gratis* relative to the arrangement of the card-tables and refreshments—and to hint that, as she should bring with her her nephew, Lord Ladbrook's eldest son, the dancing of course should not commence until he arrived; and that she hoped proper attention would be paid by the master of the ceremonies, in order that persons of *rank* should have their proper places.

The long wished-for evening at length arrived. By eight o'clock lights were seen twinkling in every dressing-room window in Richmond and its vicinity, and shortly afterwards the unfortunate *flies* began their night of ceaseless labour. Theresa, her eyes and cheeks brilliant with the additional animation of anticipated pleasure, was ready dressed long before the appointed time, and sat eagerly listening for the arrival of Lady Williams, while Trevelyan gazed on her lovely form in an ecstasy of admiration, and his sister with a melancholy smile. "Remember Theresa," said the latter, "I shall expect a full account of every thing to-morrow morning; for you know I have never been at a ball in my life, old as I am now, and therefore the smallest circumstance will be news to me. You must keep account of all your partners, and of all the pretty things they say to you, and also of whom Frederick flirts with, in short tell me every thing."

At that instant the welcome sound of the door-bell announcing Lady Williams's arrival was heard. Theresa sprang from her seat, and, giving her dear Treevy a hasty, but, if possible, a more than usually tender embrace, she took her guardian's proffered arm, and they hurried together down stairs.

As Miss Trevelyan again closed her door on their final departure, and drew her chair by her now solitary fireside, an involuntary tear stole down her cheek, and she unconsciously fell into a more melancholy reverie than any by which she had been for a long time visited. All the circumstances of her own blighted youth forced themselves on her recollection in painful contrast, and it was some time before she obtained the mastery over feelings which her strict principles condemned. Each carriage, as

Digitized by Google

it whirled past her dwelling, seemed to increase her sensation of solitary exclusion, and, in the dismal irritation of the moment, she exaggerated to herself those worldly and personal advantages which at other times were viewed by her but in the light of trials, and from the dangers of which she had so often, in the chastened resignation of her heart, thanked God for having been preserved.

CHAPTER VII.

Within the compass of these walls
Somewhere she is, although to me she is not.
Some other eye doth gaze upon her form,
Some other ear doth listen to her voice,
Some happy fav'rite doth enjoy the bliss,
My spiteful stars deny. BASIL.

LADY WILLIAMS being one of the patronesses of the ball, she had made it a point to go early, so that, when she and her companions arrived, the room was not half full. Their entrance was in consequence the more conspicuous, and all eyes were instantly fixed upon Theresa, whose beauty was of too superior an order for the possibility of two opinions existing respecting it. Trevelyan's proud heart glowed within him on observing the evident admiration bestowed upon the lovely being at his side, and, as hope whispered to him that this being was his own, he almost unconsciously pressed closer to him the precious hand then trembling on his arm.

Among the company already arrived, was the *Honourable* Mrs. Hopkins. She had of course heard that Colonel Trevelyan and his beautiful ward were to accompany Sir Henry and Lady Williams to the ball, and she determined to turn this circumstance and the evening to her own advantage. In consequence, Lady Williams and her party had scarcely entered the room before Mrs. Hopkins, with a deplorable-looking stripling at her side came bustling up to her. "How do you do, my dear madam?

Digitized by Google

—glad to see your ladyship returned so well, and Sir Henry, quite well too, I hope;" and in her bows to them, she contrived to include Trevelyan, who was of course obliged to acknowledge her salutation. "Charming room! an't it? What a pity so little use is made of it, for it is the very thing for a ball. Then pushing her companion forward, "Will your ladyship," said she to Lady Williams, "allow me to present my nephew, Mr. Ladbrook, to you?—Lord Ladbrook's eldest son, you know," added Mrs. Hopkins, in a lower but consequential tone, looking the while as if she expected this piece of information to electrify her auditors. "Is your young lady disengaged?" she continued, "for if so, I am sure my nephew will be happy to have the pleasure——," and then without waiting for an answer,—"Miss Howard, Mr. Ladbrook; Mr. Ladbrook, Miss Howard,"—and at each nomination she inclined her own body in order to make up for any possible deficiency of form in others.

Theresa curtseyed, the palefaced stripling murmured something, and Mrs. Hopkins, taking advantage of these introductions flying about, again bowed to Trevelyan, who, of course, felt himself again obliged to bow in return, and having thus by these two false presentations of herself, (which she thought might be considered as constituting one real one,) established a sort of acquaintance with him, she, disengaging herself from her hopeful nephew, and placing him at Theresa's side, with strict orders to flirt with his partner, addressed herself exclusively to the object of her attention. "Well, I really do hope we shall have a good ball," said she; "people are coming in very fast; at all events we are sure of good company, for I saw the list of subscribers to-day, and there were the Reeveses, and the Riveses, the Budgeons, and the Philpots; all unexceptionable of course, which is the great matter, for poor dear Mr. Hopkins often said, there was nothing so improper in his opinion as a mixture of company. It certainly is not easy in these levelling days to be as particular as one ought, but still it is every body's duty to try and keep society as select as possible, and Mr. Hopkins used to laugh and say that where there was *every body*, there must be *nobody*, which was cleverly said of him."

Digitized by Google

Of course Trevelyan smiled applause at this *bon-mot* of Lord Ladbrook's first cousin, and, never having thought upon the subject of select society himself, he had nothing whatever to say in contradiction to what had been advanced; but, before we proceed any further, it may be as well to explain who Mr. Hopkins and his honourable relict were. We begin with the latter.

Mrs. Hopkins was the only child of a rich citizen, and, having when quite a girl eloped from her boarding-school with the younger son of an impoverished Irish Viscount, she in consequence returned from Gretna-green the Honourable Mrs. O'Grady; after the death of Mr. O'Grady, she bestowed her hand and fortune upon Mr. Hopkins, a gentleman indebted for his connexion with the peerage to his mother, sister to the last Lord Ladbrook; who, to rescue herself from the disgrace of single blessedness, was tempted, when pretty well advanced in life, to form a strange *mesalliance* with a retired silk-throwster, in consequence of which her family refused all further connexion with her. Mrs. Hopkins, however, who was a clever woman in her way, and had all her wits about her, knew well how to turn these accidents of her own and the poor dear late Mr. Hopkins's life, to her own present advantage, and consequently, on the same principle which makes a Colonel in the army consider himself to be always a Colonel, however little military his after-life may be, she ingeniously contrived to tack to her name that handle which she had acquired by her union with her first husband to the very plebeian surname of the second, and in consequence dubbed herself the *Honourable* Mrs. Hopkins. The combination was unfortunate and incongruous, but what she had thus chosen to join together no one could certainly care to put asunder, and consequently as the *Honourable* Mrs. Hopkins she was addressed.

But her good luck and good guidance did not stop here; she had a few years back been fortunate enough to discover that Lord Ladbrook's son was at a school in the neighbourhood, and immediately setting off with a chaise full of cakes and maids of honour, she, (boldly calling herself his aunt,) ingratiated herself with the boy through the medium of her confectionary, and having obtained

Digitized by Google

leave from the school-master that he should occasionally pass Saturdays and Sundays with her at Richmond, she still further secured the affections of the young heir, by making him regularly sick on each of these visits with ice fruit and eel-pies, in addition to the already named cakes and maids of honour. All these favours had made a deep impression not only on the heart but the constitution of young Ladbrook, and to the pastry-cook's shop at Richmond might probably be traced his deplorable pale face and diminutive stature. Now that he was a student at Oxford, he still, to his credit, kept up his clandestine intercourse with his proscribed aunt Hopkins, and joyfully accepted her invitation to the ball at the Star and Garter, as well as her proffers of bed and board.

Such was Mrs. Hopkins's history up to the time of her attack on Trevelyan, (for we need not dwell on the year and the tears of her second widowhood, as they made no greater impression on her own mind than they probably would make on that of the reader.) Having by the clever manœuvre already related established a degree of spurious acquaintance with the tall, handsome Colonel, and already anticipating the effect which would be produced when at her next dinner-party she should astonish her neighbours by the appearance of the next heir but one to an earldom, Mrs. Hopkins determined not to lose the advantage thus gained, and therefore, resolutely maintaining her station at his side, she continued to address him.

"I hope you left Lord Launceston quite well," said she, and in so easy a tone of acquaintance, that Trevelyan, not a little surprised at the seeming intimacy between Mrs. Hopkins and his proud aristocratic relative, said directly, "Oh, you know my uncle?"

"Why, I do not exactly personally know him," said Mrs. Hopkins, in some little embarrassment at this direct question. "It is a great many years since I had the pleasure of seeing his lordship, for I live now so much out of the world, that I lose sight of all my friends. A charming woman was the late Lady Launceston, but always sadly delicate, quite an exotic!"

Again Trevelyan, with cruel perseverance, inquired into Mrs. Hopkins's acquaintance with his aunt.

Digitized by Google

"Oh, yes; of course I knew Lady Launceston," she replied, "for I used to meet her ladyship at the drawing-room. In former days, drawing-rooms were not what they are now; it was not *every body*, you know, who then went to court, and that was the reason it was so pleasant! If poor dear Mr. Hopkins was alive, I dare say he would insist on my going to the drawing-room every year, for he used to say it was every body's duty to keep up their proper place in society; and, between ourselves, I believe their Majesties like such attentions—but now"—and she sighed—"I have a foolish sort of shyness about me, though I am sure I need not, for the Royal family have been always particularly kind to me, and the very last time I was at Court, I remember quite well the dear King saying, 'How does Mr. Hopkins do?' quite in an easy way. He had then, it must be confessed, been dead two years, poor man,"—and again Mrs. Hopkins sighed. "Still, however, it was very kind and flattering of his Majesty inquiring after him. But all that is changed now," and she drew another deep sigh over the loss of—Trevelyan did not very well know, what. Just then, luckily for him, the music struck up. "Oh, there they are going to begin. Come, my dear Ladbrook, lead Miss Howard to the top of the room, or you will be too late," and she bustled away after the master of the ceremonies, in order to secure for her *protégé* a place suited to his consequence.

Trevelyan, delighted at having thus got rid of his companion, also followed the dancers, but took care to direct his steps to the opposite side of the room. Again, as he followed with his eyes her who alone, amid the crowd which surrounded him, attracted his attention, he, with proud feelings of self-congratulation, exulted in her superiority of look, air, and manner, over all around; and if ever such selfish vanity is pardonable, surely it may be so in a man of thirty-four desperately in love with a girl of seventeen.

As soon as the dance was over, Theresa, whose eyes had been the whole time wandering round the room, at last spied out her guardian, and having had quite enough of her dull *Honourable* partner, she immediately hasten-

Digitized by Google

ed to his side. "How I wish you danced!" said she, with most winning *naïveté*, after having expatiated on the stupidity of her late companion, "for somehow, I am not sure I think this ball quite so charming as I expected it to be; at least, if this is all; and again she unconsciously cast her eyes around, as if in search of some expected object; "but," continued she after a moment, "if you danced it would of course be quite different."

"And do you not think it would be still more different to me, Theresa? replied Trevelyan, with a look and tone which even she must have understood.—"I, who have all this time most wickedly envied the smart dandies skipping about you, and coveted their sound ankles unscathed by cannon balls."

"That's a story," said Theresa archly; "I am quite sure that in your heart you do not envy them at all, and would not take their useless, insignificant lives for all the unwounded ankles in the room; by your countenance I am sure I am right," and the colour glowed brilliantly in Theresa's cheeks as she spoke.

This little compliment thrilled to Trevelyan's inmost soul. "A year ago, perhaps, I would not," he replied; "for then war was my only mistress—but now!—what pleasure can there be in wounds, however gained, compared to that of dancing with you?"

Theresa looked down and said nothing, and Trevelyan, who felt that he had been betrayed into saying more than he meant, was also silent.

The room was by this time very full, and preparations seemed making for another set, as the ladies and gentlemen were bowing, curtseying, and pairing off like birds in spring. "As you have no partner for this dance," said Trevelyan, "shall we walk about and see the world?"

Theresa, delighted at the proposal, readily agreed, and they began their no easy progress through the room. The noise and crowd seemed to bewilder her; she spoke little, and her eyes still wandered anxiously around. At length, with something like a sigh,—"A ball is but a dull thing after all," said she, "when one knows nobody, and excepting Mrs. Hopkins, I don't think there is a creature in the room whom I ever saw before."

Digitized by Google

She had scarcely pronounced these words when Trevelyan felt her give a violent start. He instantly looked round to discover what had occasioned it, when, following the direction of her eyes, his emotion nearly equalled that of his ward on beholding, at no great distance, his persecutor on the river, the master of the Newfoundland dog, who in a moment turned towards them. He fixed his eyes eagerly on Theresa, and, although her's were then hastily averted, the burning blush upon her cheeks betrayed her consciousness of being recognised. Trevelyan bit his lip in anger and vexation, and he was meditating in what manner to effect an escape, when the stranger, having quickly made his way through the intervening crowd, was already close at their side. He slightly bowed to Trevelyan, who then, to his astonishment, heard him not only address Theresa by her name, but in the familiar tone of an acknowledged acquaintance, request the pleasure of being her partner for the dance just then beginning. Trevelyan darted on the bold adventurer a look of astonishment and indignation, and pressing Theresa's arm more closely to his side, endeavoured to move on.

But still there the stranger stood, and again repeated his as yet unanswered request. Trevelyan's blood now began to boil, and he was about to remonstrate on the liberty thus taken, when, to his utter consternation, Theresa, forcibly withdrawing her hand from his arm, yielded it to the unknown waterman, and in an instant they were both lost in the crowd.

The whole of this transaction, which had not occupied above a minute, left Trevelyan petrified! His first impulse was to rush after the bold pirate and call upon him to relinquish his prize; but fully aware of the ungovernable nature of his feelings when once roused, and sensible that a public ball-room was not the place for such a scene as he felt his present excited temper might occasion, he had just sufficient power over himself to delay the pursuit of his enemy until he had made up his mind as to what he should say and do.

He was still in this perturbed state, fixed as if spellbound to the spot at which Theresa had left him, and his

Digitized by Google

very forehead scarlet with agitation, when Sir Henry Williams came up to him. "Why, I have been looking for you everywhere," said he; "I want to present Lord Herbert Leslie to you, for he is prodigiously anxious to make your acquaintance, having already met with your ladies at our house."

"Who?—what—Leslie?" said Trevelyan still bewildered, and the name instantly catching his ear, although at the moment he in his confusion hardly knew why—"Leslie, did you say?"

"Yes, Leslie! Why, what is the matter with you, my dear Colonel, are you not well? you look so hot."

"Abominable hot," replied Trevelyan with much impatience; "but what did you say, for that confounded music makes such a noise I cannot hear a word?"

Sir Henry, not a little surprised at his friend's strange agitated manner, again repeated his speech about Lord Herbert's desire to be made known to him. "It seems," he continued, "that he fell in with you one day by the river, or on the high road, I forget which, when his dog frightened Miss Howard, and so, as I said before, having met her and your sister at dinner at our house, he now wishes for the pleasure of your acquaintance."

During this explanatory speech of Sir Henry's, Trevelyan by degrees recovered his senses, and his eyes opened upon the whole affair, but he was still so entirely occupied by that dreadful tell-tale blush on Theresa's face, that not at all attending to the main purport of Sir Henry's speech, (namely, his introduction to Lord Herbert,) he still in absent perturbation merely repeated his name.

"Leslie! Leslie did you say?"

"Yes, *Lord Herbert Leslie*, I tell you, is his name," said Sir Henry, getting in his turn a little out of patience. "Why, Lord bless the man, what is come over you? surely you can have no objection to make his acquaintance; he is Lord Falkirk's son, a person very well known, and ten to one is at this minute close behind us," added Sir Henry, looking around, "and hears all this pretty discussion about him, for he was this instant with me and most anxious to find you."

Digitized by Google

Trevelyan, who had by this time, by putting various circumstances together, identified the Leslie of the Funny-club wherry with the unknown waterman, the master of the Newfoundland dog, and Theresa's present partner, related, although not in a very distinct manner, what had passed.

"And so," said Sir Henry, laughing, "you took Lord Herbert for some impudent adventurer carrying off your precious charge, and I suppose if I had not luckily come up, would by this time have run him through the body—excellent! excellent! PoorColonel! excuse me—but really you and your ward put me in mind of a hen with a young duck; and faith I must own she needs looking after, for she is as cunning a little flirt as ever I met with."

This speech was not calculated to put Trevelyan in any better humour; again his blood boiled in his veins, and he was scarcely able to command himself even towards the good humoured baronet, longing also for an explanation with regard to his charge against Theresa, yet feeling that he was not at the moment in a fit state to bear any more vexation.

"Did they meet at your house more than once?" said he, at last, following the train of his own thoughts, and commanding his voice as well as he could.

"Oh! no, only that once," replied Sir Henry, smiling at his friend's excessive anxiety, "don't be alarmed, I was only joking; and after all, what more natural than that a young woman should go and dance with a young man, and that *that* young man should admire her—for, faith! every one must do that—and it is also perfectly natural that she should have no objection to his admiration. This is all I meant, I assure you; so now smooth down your ruffled feathers and come with me, and make friends with the supposed highwayman—the nearer the less danger, is, you know, our military maxim, and your wisest plan will be to make up to the poacher, whoever he may be, the better to observe his snares." So saying, taking Trevelyan's arm, Sir Henry led him towards the top of the room; but he met by the way with so many friends to whom he had so much to say that he soon for-

Digitized by Google

got the object with which he had started, and the crowd separating them, Trevelyan, hot, tired, thoroughly discomposed, and feeling at the moment little inclined to hold any converse except with his own thoughts, made his retreat towards an empty bench, and there remained a prey to his no very agreeable reflections. Theresa's violent start, and the crimson blush which had coloured her face at the sight of Lord Herbert, painfully haunted him. How strange, too, her total silence with regard to her meeting with him at Sir Henry Williams's!—she who was so open, so artless, and had so long been in the habit of freely telling him whatever gave her pain or pleasure.

It now also occurred to him that this dinner at Lady Williams's had never been in any way mentioned by Theresa, and, in her monotonous life, it was an event which could not have passed unnoticed. Then Sir Henry's accusation, "that she was as cunning a flirt as ever he met with." What could he mean? to what could he allude?

As all these torturing thoughts were passing through his mind, Trevelyan was suddenly roused from his abstraction by the appearance of Theresa close to him in the dance. At that moment Lord Herbert was speaking to another person, and Trevelyan, fancying he saw a shade of melancholy over her countenance, was too happy to find any excuse for the being he worshipped, and to be able still to cling, if but a moment, to the delightful hopes in which he had lately indulged. Quickly, therefore, passing from one extreme to another, he now directed all his displeasure towards himself, cursing those violent ungovernable feelings which had nearly betrayed him into the act of a madman. But then, the blush! the start! the strange reserve!——

Thus distracted by contending feelings, poor Trevelyan remained at his solitary seat, ever and anon pesting against the cannon-ball which forced him thus to relinquish to others that hand which he felt to be almost his own property.

The dance at last ended, and at the usual pause which follows, all the performers paraded in pairs up and down to rest and to cool, but Trevelyan did not among them

Digitized by Google

discover either Theresa or Lord Herbert, and leaving his seat, he searched all round the ball-room, but in vain. At last, seeing some parties going into an adjoining apartment, allotted, he was told, to refreshments, he followed them, and there, resting on a couch, Lord Herbert at her side, he beheld the object of his pursuit. The agreeable conversation in which they were seemingly engaged so entirely engrossed them, that they were not aware of Trevelyan's entrance until he was almost close by them. The moment Theresa saw him, she started from her seat, and in evident embarrassment seemed anxious to apologise for her absence, saying she had merely left the dancing-room for a few minutes, in order to get some tea. Trevelyan's thoughts were too much occupied by what had lately passed, and by the *tête-à-tête* which he now detected, to allow him immediately to converse on any different subject, and it was still more impossible for him at that moment to allude to that nearest his heart; an awkward silence therefore ensued.

At length Lord Herbert, the only one of the party who did not seem disconcerted, broke it by requesting Theresa to present him to Colonel Trevelyan. With an unsteady voice, downcast eyes, and a degree of awkwardness of manner very unusual to her, Theresa went through the usual ceremony on such occasions. "Miss Howard," said Lord Herbert, directly, "has been in great anxiety to join her party, but I persuaded her to come here for a little refreshment and cooler air, the ball-room is so disagreeably hot and crowded."

"Very disagreeable, indeed!" repeated Trevelyan, and he spoke feelingly, for it certainly had been particularly so to him. And again there was a pause—at length Trevelyan in some degree recovering his composure, and addressing Lord Herbert, said, "Does your lordship reside in this neighbourhood?"

"Oh dear, no," he replied; "it was by mere accident I heard of this ball, when with my uncle in Cambridgeshire, and I came on purpose for it."

"I suppose, then, you have the true Scotch love of dancing," continued Trevelyan, a sarcastic smile passing over his countenance.

Digitized by Google

"No," replied Lord Herbert carelessly. "I fear I am but a degenerate Scot, as I have little taste for our national amusement, and was attracted here merely by—the bewitching beauty of—the place, which is to me always charming, and which I am sorry to say I am obliged immediately to leave for our more northern regions."

"Thank Heaven!" ejaculated Trevelyan to himself. Whether Theresa added "Amen," may be doubtful.

During this conversation, she had remained standing at her guardian's side, Lord Herbert as resolutely maintaining his place at her's, but neither gentleman offered her his arm, and thus, in no small embarrassment, they returned to the dancing-room. When there, the trio still stood for a few minutes together in silence: at length Theresa, in a penitent, subdued, under-tone, said to Trevelyan, "Will you not let me take your arm? I am very tired."

This sort of humble petition for reconciliation and forgiveness of an offence to which neither could have given a name, and yet of which both were fully sensible in their respective situations of aggriever and aggrieved, was irresistible. Trevelyan again looked on her in kindness; and, as she raised her timid, conscious eyes towards him, the loveliest smile brightened her countenance, on observing that the expression in his had somewhat relaxed.

"If you are so very tired, and indeed you appear to be so," said Trevelyan, again looking at her with contending feelings of hope and fear, "had you not better sit down and rest? There is an empty couch, let us take possession of it."

Theresa directly assented to his proposal, and they repaired to the unoccupied seat, followed however by Lord Herbert, who, having professed that he knew no creature in the room, seemed by that declaration to intimate his right and intention not to leave Theresa's side. The dance began and ended, and another and another followed; still there Lord Herbert remained fixed; sometimes, with most provoking perseverance, endeavouring to force Trevelyan into friendly conversation, but oftener, under covert of the music's noise, carrying on a *sotto voce* dis-

Digitized by Google

course with Theresa, who again soon forgot her guardian's presence.

Trevelyan at last could no longer endure this trial of his temper and feelings, and, discovering Lady Williams at no great distance, he proposed joining her in the hope of putting an end to the earnest whisperings of his companions. He then informed her that Theresa had no partner, and, the hint being immediately taken, a disengaged young officer was speedily found, too happy to obtain an introduction to the most beautiful girl in the room. The usual forms on such occasions were soon gone through, and as Theresa, little practised in the ways of the world, had no ready excuse to make, she was obliged to accept the proffered hand and arm of her new acquaintance, and with him to join the dancers. Lord Herbert then instantly disappeared; and Trevelyan, thoroughly discomposed, sat down by Lady Williams.

"These public balls are very bad things," said he, after a pause of some minutes. "I wonder you patronise them."

"If they were often repeated, they would certainly become tiresome," replied Lady Williams, "but occasionally they are amusing enough, from that very mixture of company of which poor Mrs. Hopkins complains so much, for she was here this minute in a terrible taking, because she spied out Simpson, the retired upholsterer."

"Are you much acquainted with him?" continued Trevelyan, after another pause, during which, instead of listening to Lady Williams, he had been ruminating on Lord Herbert's intimacy with Theresa.

"Much *acquainted* with him?" replied Lady Williams laughing; "no, I cannot say we have had much intercourse since he furnished my house twenty years ago."

Trevelyan stared. "I was talking of Lord Herbert Leslie;" said he with some embarrassment, "have you known him long?"

"Lord Herbert Leslie! why I never heard you name him! No, I can't say I know much of him, for we only made his acquaintance this last summer. Sir Henry fell in with him one day when he was fishing, and as you know we accuse him of knowing everybody's father,"

Digitized by Google

she added, laughing, "of course he soon discovered he had once been acquainted with Lord Falkirk, and so he asked Lord Herbert to dinner. But I don't know whom he is with here to-night, for I was not even aware of his being in this part of the world, or I should certainly have proposed to him to join our party, for he seems a particularly gentleman-like, agreeable young man."

Trevelyan made no remark on the commendatory part of Lady Williams's speech, and they continued together in silence; the former entirely engrossed by his reflections, and the latter in that sort of trance into which unfortunate chaperons are lulled towards the close of a ball. For it was now growing late, the two dances for which Theresa had been engaged to the young officer were over, but she had not returned; another set was immediately formed, still Theresa did not appear.

"It is long past one," said Lady Williams to her companion. "Don't you think we had better go in search of Miss Howard, as it is time to be thinking of going home," and they were just leaving their seats for that purpose, when Mrs. Hopkins came bustling towards them, and in a prodigious fluster, addressing Lady Williams,

"God bless you, my dear madam, do tell me if you can, who that very genteel-looking young man is who is dancing with Miss Howard, for it is so odd, nobody seems to know him. There they are—that 's him; the gentleman in black just going down the middle."

"Oh, it is Lord Herbert Leslie," replied Lady Williams.

Trevelyan started, and it was all he could do to repress his vexation, for it was but too true Theresa was again dancing with his rival.

"Bless me! Lord Herbert Leslie!" exclaimed Mrs. Hopkins, apparently quite overpowered by the intelligence. "Where in the world does he live? where is he to be found?"

"I really cannot tell," replied Lady Williams; "but if you have any particular reason for wishing to know, perhaps I could find out."

"Could you? Your ladyship would be doing me an incalculable favour—for I was thinking," continued Mrs.

Digitized by Google

Hopkins, her eyes still following Lord Herbert, as if fearful lest such a prize might escape her—"I was thinking that it was a great pity now that I have my nephew, Lord Ladbrook's eldest son, with me, and that there are so many nice dancers collected together, not to do a little something, and so I was thinking of a quiet hop at my house to-morrow evening; and first and foremost, I came to request the pleasure of your ladyship's and Sir Henry's company. As for Colonel Trevelyan and Miss Howard, they come of course, for next-door neighbours should not even wait for an invitation, but pop in and out of each other's houses whenever they like."

Had Trevelyan's mind not been otherwise engaged, this intimate popping proposal of Mrs. Hopkins would have made his blood run cold; but at that moment he thought of, he saw, but Theresa, who on her part was evidently too entirely engrossed by her partner to bestow one thought on any thing else.

"Everybody seems delighted at my plan," continued Mrs. Hopkins; "so I really hope we shall have a cheerful little evening, and as I shall be too happy to see any friend of your ladyship's or of Colonel Trevelyan's," she added again smiling at him, "I will request you to be so good as distribute these cards among your acquaintance;" and Mrs. Hopkins put into Lady's Williams's hands a whole pack of 'Mrs. Hopkins at home—2, Paragon—a little early dance.'—"As for Lord Leslie Herbert," she continued, "since you are so very intimate with him, perhaps you will do me the favour of introducing me to his lordship, and I will then ask him myself in person; and now I must just step down to the bottom of the room to secure Mr. Osbourne of the Guards, and Captain Jones from Hounslow barracks; I shall be back directly, and pray keep your eye on Lord Leslie."

"Really, Mrs. Hopkins," said Lady Williams, now for the first time able to get in a word, "I fear neither Sir Henry nor myself are equal to such dissipation as a ball two nights running, so you must excuse us."

"Oh no, my dear Madam, I can hear of no excuses; why, you will meet all your friends, and perhaps, indeed, as it is so near, even Miss Trevelyan may be tempted

Digitized by Google

to look in upon us," continued the persevering Mrs. Hopkins, "and that would indeed be an honour, for I know she is a sad invalid; but just next door, she can't catch cold, and it will be quite a quiet, comfortable sort of hop. I shall not even take up the carpet, and mean only to have Matthews to play on the piano, and tea and cakes, and that sort of thing; so that it will be but a sort of refreshment after to-night, and serve only to unstiffen the young folk; and really it would be such a pity to let so many nice young men slip through one's fingers in a manner, wouldn't it? And there is no saying what another evening may bring about in a certain quarter," added Mrs. Hopkins, looking significantly towards Theresa and her partner, "for every one says they never saw so decided a flirtation as that seems to be. Dear, preserve me! there is Captain Jones going, I fear; I must just go and speak to him, so mind and secure Lord Leslie;" and off went Mrs. Hopkins smiling and nodding, as if she had received the most cordial acquiescence to her proposals.

Just then the music stopped, and Theresa, with the downcast looks of a conscious criminal, returned to her party, escorted by Lord Herbert, who did not leave her until he had placed her in Lady Williams's carriage. She said little going home, and Trevelyan uttered not a word. But Sir Henry, always gay and good-humoured, made up for their silence, by commenting largely on all that had passed. When they reached home, Trevelyan got out first.

"As the guardian was present," said Sir Henry, laughing to Theresa, and detaining her by the hand, "I had no responsibility to-night, otherwise, little Miss Flirt, you should not have gone on at the rate you did—one, two, three, four dances, to my knowledge, with a certain gentleman that shall be nameless, besides whisperings and coquettings in corners, for I had my eye upon you all the time. I now give you up as a bad job, and the bargain between us is fairly broken: so good night, sleep soundly, and do not dream of Highland chieftains more than you can help."

Theresa, forcibly withdrawing her hand, sprang out of

Digitized by Google

the carriage, and had reached her own apartment long before Sir Henry had ceased his jokes about poachers, highwaymen, and hens with young ducks, to which Trevelyan was of course obliged to listen, but which were not calculated to improve either his spirits or his temper.

When Theresa next morning went down to breakfast, she found that her guardian had finished his repast, and, very unlike his usual habit, had already left the drawing-room.

"Well, Theresa," said Miss Trevelyan, as soon as she appeared, "what accounts shall I have of the ball from you? I do not think Frederick gives a very favourable report of his night's amusement, but possibly you and he may have seen it in a different light—so what do you say?"

"Oh! you know I never was at a ball before!" replied Theresa, "so I can be no judge whether it was good or bad."

"But did you like it? Did you find it what you had expected?"

Theresa coloured. "Oh! yes, I suppose so ——"

"And you danced a good deal?" enquired Miss Trevelyan. "Who were your partners?"

"I really do not remember their names; Mrs. Hopkins's nephew was one, but I forget what she called him."

"And I find you met with our aquatic friend, whom we made acquaintance with at Sir Henry Williams's," continued Miss Trevelyan. "Lord Herbert Leslie, I mean. Did you not dance with him?"

"Yes, of course he asked me," said Theresa, averting her face to conceal her still more heightened colour. "He could hardly help doing so, when we had spent a whole evening together."

Miss Trevelyan smiled at her young friend's hasty explanation of a circumstance which had not been called in question, but at the same time that she was amused by it, it roused her suspicions, and she felt no doubt that Lord Herbert's attentions had, by flattering her vanity, again exclusively engrossed her. Colonel Trevelyan's very visible depression also corroborated the idea, for the ball had evidently been no scene of pleasure to him, although

Digitized by Google

he had not had courage to inform his sister of all that had passed, as he felt that, by embodying his fears in words, he should impart to them a reality from which he still shrank in dismay.

Miss Trevelyan prudently said no more to Theresa on the subject of her unacknowledged admirer, for, even if her fancy had been again for a minute captivated, or her young head turned by his flattering attentions, still she hoped it would prove but a passing fancy, as she could hardly conceive it possible that any one could be really preferred to her all-perfect Frederick. She therefore resolved, instead of lecturing Theresa, to take *him* to task for thus allowing trifles to torment him, and to advise him, by treating her flirtation with his supposed rival as a mere joke, to make her consider it in the same light herself. This advice, however, she had no opportunity to give, before they again all three met, which was not till dinner time, when both her brother and his ward scarcely spoke. Miss Trevelyan more than once gaily rallied them on their ill-humour, endeavouring to restore them to their wonted spirits, but in vain; and, as soon as the repast was over, Colonel Trevelyan, pleading particular business, immediately returned to his own apartment, and did not again join them during the whole evening, while Theresa, on her part, under pretext of reading a book whose pages she forgot to turn over, passed it in silent abstraction.

Before long the sounds of music proceeding from the nex house, announced that Mrs. Hopkins's "*little hop*" had begun. But how it succeeded, whether Captain Jones, or Mr. Osbourne of the guards were secured, and whether Lord Herbert, in the hope of meeting Theresa, made Mrs. Hopkins happy by joining her party, is not known, as neither Colonel Trevelyan and his ward, nor Sir Henry and Lady Williams, were present. Miss Trevelyan was half-inclined to think that her young companion's very evident dejection might be occasioned by their near neighbourhood to an entertainment of which she did not partake, and with her usual unselfish kindness, she was on the point of proposing to Theresa to accompany her to Mrs. Hopkins'; but, just as she was

Digitized by Google

summoning courage for the effort, Theresa, with her eyes red and heavy, and complaining of a violent headache, came to wish her good night, declaring herself to be quite knocked up, and that nothing but a good night's rest would restore her.

"Indeed, I think you can do no better than go to bed," said Miss Trevelyan, kindly kissing her, "and I trust to-morrow I shall see you quite yourself again; if not," added she smiling, "I give notice I shall not allow you or Frederick to go to any more balls, as they seem to be so particularly unwholesome to both mind and body."

The next morning, however, matters had very little mended, for the same coldness and reserve still continued, and a sudden death-blow appeared to have been mysteriously given to the cheerfulness of this once happy party, their former confidence and affectionate sympathy being exchanged for silence and even suspicion. Trevelyan longed to speak openly to Theresa, in order at once to ascertain the truth, but still felt restrained by his self-inflicted vow of silence, as he did not consider himself at liberty, even as a guardian, to pry into her sentiments without making a confession of his own; besides, if he had been hitherto restrained from any such disclosures by honour, he was now still more powerfully deterred by fear, as he dreaded an explanation which might totally crush all his fondest hopes.

Thus passed many days, Lord Herbert was never named, nor did he ever appear. The morning following the ball, he did indeed call, while Trevelyan had strolled out in order to cool his feverish head after a sleepless night, but whether he then asked for the ladies of the family never transpired; for old John knew his duty too well to let any one in to his mistress without positive orders, and Trevelyan on his return home, seeing his card lying on the hall-table, in a moment of irritation, and without asking any questions, threw it hastily into the fire, and thus prevented its ever reaching the drawing-room. Theresa, therefore, remained in total ignorance of Lord Herbert's endeavouring to follow up his acquaintance with her; and this seeming neglect on his part probably piqued her vanity, for by degrees the impression

Digitized by Google

which his flattering attentions had evidently made upon her imagination, seemed to wear off; and, as her smiles gradually returned, with them returned Trevelyan's spirits and good-humour. Again the guardian and ward resumed their former social habits, and once more were Theresa's joyous laugh and melodious voice heard gladdening their fire-side.

But still they could not return to that happy open confidence which had formerly existed between them, and in which the happiness of both seemed then to consist. Theresa's timid altered manner, which Trevelyan had a short time back fancied to betoken feelings the most congenial to his own, now pained and irritated him as a proof of dislike to himself, in consequence of preference to another; and if, still at times deluded by his passion, he momentarily gave way to hope, it was of too feeble, too transient, a nature to subdue his apprehensions, and therefore only increased the nervous excitement in which he lived. He had on principle tutored his tongue, but he could not exercise equal power over his eyes, and he was well aware that they often spoke a language which now could not possibly be mistaken by Theresa; but yet he hardly knew how to interpret the downcast looks and varying colours with which she replied to it, or what meaning to give to the deep-drawn sighs which he observed invariably to follow these their *silent* conversations.

CHAPTER VIII.

Meanwhile the generous glowing breast,
Where nature MAN's high name imprest,
  Where honour tramples fraud;
Superior to the sing-song lyre,
Shall swell in secret, as the choir
  Deludingly applaud. *Old Song.*

THE severity of the winter was now over, and one day towards the end of February, Trevelyan received the following letter from his uncle Lord Launceston.

Digitized by Google

"My dear Frederick,—Of course you are aware that on the 26th of next month my son comes of age. It is my particular wish to celebrate this event with all the distinction which I consider to be due to the future head of our family, and, flattering myself that you and my niece have inherited with the *name* a sufficient share of the old-fashioned aristocratic *feeling* of the House of Trevelyan, to be inclined to make some exertion for the sake of doing honour to your cousin, I am induced to hope that neither the length of the journey nor Miss Trevelyan's delicacy of health, will deprive us of the pleasure of your company at Trevelyan Castle on that auspicious day.

"St. Ives is anxious to make your acquaintance, and I think I may venture to promise you some degree of personal gratification in his, since, independently of any feelings of parental partiality, he is generally considered, I am proud to say, as bidding fair to be a worthy representative of the distinguished, indeed I may add, *historical* family of Trevelyan; my neighbours both in this and the adjoining county, (in which you know I have also much property,) have all expressed the pleasure with which they will obey my summons, and of course all my relations and connexions will attend on the 26th. So that you will find no contemptible party to meet you.

"As I learn that my niece still retains with her that young person whom she has, I must say, so injudiciously, taken under her protection, and understanding that she does not like to be long absent from home on her account, I beg to include her in my invitation, as I trust you and your sister will make us a visit proportionable in length to the journey you have to take. Augusta begs her kind remembrances to you and her cousin—and I am your sincere "Launceston."

This letter might have been considered by many, less acquainted with the peculiarities of Lord Launceston's character and Trevelyan, as an affront rather than a civility, for it certainly appeared by it as if he thought the honour and gratification to result from the proposed meeting between the relatives would be entirely on the

Digitized by Google

side of Colonel Trevelyan and his sister. But the former was well aware that, when dwelling thus on his own importance, distinctions, and possessions, his uncle meant to do honour to those who had the good fortune to be so nearly allied to him, and also felt, that it was impossible without very good reasons, to refuse compliance with Lord Launceston's wishes on such an occasion. But at the same time that he made up his mind to accept the invitation, he resolved upon not going alone, as he was quite determined that he would not leave Theresa a second time at the mercy of highwaymen and river-pirates.

The ungracious manner in which she was named by Lord Launceston was what most irritated his feelings and his pride; but, situated as he was, he had but a choice of evils, and he therefore preferred overlooking the affront both for himself and Theresa, to parting with his precious charge. It was no easy task to persuade Miss Trevelyan to accede to this proposed journey into Cornwall, for her health was so much impaired, and her spirits were in consequence so weak, that she shrank from such exertions, dreading every thing which disturbed the monotonous repose of her life; but Trevelyan urged his suit so vehemently, representing in such strong terms what was due from them to their uncle, and the great advantage that might accrue to Theresa from the good will of Lord Launceston and his daughter, which he was sure could not fail to be the consequence of their acquaintance with her, that at last Miss Trevelyan, who was the most unselfish of mortals, no longer objected.

Theresa was duly informed of this general invitation from Lord Launceston and Lady Augusta, and of the intention of accepting it, without, however, being permitted to peruse the letter itself. She did not appear, at first, at all to rejoice at this projected expedition, as neither the aristocratic father, nor his well-educated daughter, had found particular favour in her eyes, and she therefore anticipated little pleasure in the intended visit; but, when Trevelyan mentioned that Lord Launceston's object in collecting all his friends and relations together on the 26th was to celebrate his son's coming of age, and that a large party, and gay doings would in consequence take

Digitized by Google

place, Theresa seemed on a sudden to see the affair in a new light, and now, instead of bringing forward difficulties and objections, she assisted her guardian in overcoming those of his sister.

Time was, when Trevelyan would have boldly inquired into the secret cause of such a sudden change of inclination; time was when Theresa herself would have volunteered revealing her motives—when, indeed, Trevelyan would have read them in her open heart, and artless countenance without the help of explanatory words—but such delightful confidence no longer existed between them. Indeed, Trevelyan himself now as carefully shunned all such explanations as Theresa appeared to elude them. And at last, after in vain seeking in his own mind some reason for her present unlooked-for zeal and anxiety on the subject, he (although not without a sigh at thus detecting in her character a degree of frivolity to which he had thought her superior) attributed her apparent strong anticipation of pleasure in this visit solely to that love of amusement and novelty, which is, after all, but natural in youth; and he ended by rejoicing at the bright smiles and joyous spirits, which, indicating he hoped, an unscathed heart, once more cheered his soul.

Thus, in restored gaiety and good humour, the guardian and ward set off on their expedition to Cornwall. Miss Trevelyan's spirits could not at all keep pace with those of her two companions. She had not been at Trevelyan Castle since quite a girl, the unfortunate coolness between her father and Lord Launceston having put an end to all friendly intercourse between the families for many years previous to the death of the former; and as she drew near the end of her journey, and each one well-known hill, valley, and turn of road met her eye, she became more and more affected. How strange! how dreamy! are our feelings when we thus, after an interval of many years, revisit the haunt of our first youth. Every inanimate object so precisely the same, and yet every thing (and most of all ourselves) so changed!

To one as prone "to chew the cud of sad reflection" as Miss Trevelyan, this return, at forty-five, to what had been to her a second home when fifteen, could not fail to

Digitized by Google

produce abstraction and depression. The forms of parents, sisters, friends (now all mouldering in the dust,) who had once been the inhabitants of that home which she now saw filled by another race, rose up before her in sad array—intervening years and events all vanished, and, as she entered each well-remembered apartment, she unconsciously looked round for those who had formerly occupied them, and could almost have fancied she heard their footsteps. Thus she passed many days so wholly engrossed by the recollections of by-gone years that her mind was hardly at liberty to attend to what was passing around her.

Lady Augusta was civil to all, because it was right and proper that she, as mistress of the house, should be hospitable, but as such attentions seemed to be rather the effects of calculation than of feeling, they were generally bestowed in exact proportion to the claims which her guests had upon her civility, either in consequence of their rank or consanguinity. Her welcome of her cousin Colonel Trevelyan was of course particularly flattering, and his sister, being likewise one of her nearest relations, also came in for an unusual share of her kindness; but as for poor Theresa, a cold, distant curtesy was all she obtained, Lady Augusta having, to all appearance, in her reception of the despised orphan, followed the example set by Lord Launceston, who after shaking his nephew and niece heartily by the hand, turned formally to Theresa, and inquiring in a very audible whisper of Trevelyan her name, which he affected to have forgotten, dryly "hoped Miss Howard was well."

At the sight of Theresa's confusion Trevelyan had nearly again darted out at the hall-door, but, certain that before long all this proud systematic coldness would give way to the charm of her beauty and manner, he resolved to take all in good part, and lecture his sensitive charge with regard to exercising the same forbearance herself. The fatigue of the journey, and the still more fatiguing bustle of a large assemblage of company, affected Miss Trevelyan's health so much, that she was soon compelled to seek repose and quiet in her own apartment; for the party collected at the castle was already numerous, al-

Digitized by Google

though neither the hero of the moment, young Lord St. Ives, nor many a still expected guest, had yet arrived.

This indisposition of Miss Trevelyan, which confined her for several days, naturally threw her brother and his ward still more together than they otherwise would have been, for she now clung to him as to her only friend. To him she addressed all her remarks, to him confided all her little distresses. He was her constant companion in their walks, her squire in their rides; and when her speaking eyes invited him to the seat next to her at dinner, he, nothing loth, obeyed their bewitching summons, often relinquishing for it the *place d'honneur* at his cousin's side, in seemingly total unconsciousness of her very decided partiality.

And this even more than usual intercourse with her guardian, into which Theresa was by circumstances thrown on their first arrival at Trevelyan Castle, she seemed voluntarily to continue even after her peculiarly prepossessing manners and appearance had interested every one (excepting Lady Augusta) in her favour. A very short time indeed had elapsed before she had many an admirer, and might have had many a declared lover, had she given them any encouragement; but such admiration, instead of gratifying, seemed rather to annoy, and its only effect was to provoke her ridicule, and induce her to avoid those who professed it. In short, Trevelyan, the now again happy Trevelyan, appeared to be the only being who found favour in her eyes, the only one whose attentions did not seem to be positively disagreeable to her. With what pleasure did he then listen to his sister's raillery on his former jealous fancies, and her fond encomiums on his young charge for being thus superior to that heartless vanity which ever aims at inspiring feelings that cannot be returned.

But had Trevelyan had courage to examine the ground on which his present happiness rested, he would have been forced to acknowledge to himself that his hopes were built but on an unsteady foundation. For kind, friendly, and communicative as Theresa was now to him, yet he could not but be aware that even in his seemingly preferred society she was not happy. Her lately restored

Digitized by Google

cheerfulness had gradually died away; she was often for hours silent and abstracted, while a certain restlessness of look and manner plainly indicated the constant expectation of a something which was never realized; and if at first the Richmond ball had fallen short of what she had anticipated, still more did the visit to Trevelyan Castle appear to have ended in disappointment.

Above a week had now elapsed since their arrival, each day having brought some change or addition to the society at the castle, but Lord St. Ives had not yet made his appearance, being still at a friend's house in the neighbourhood. At last, one afternoon, when the whole party had gone up stairs to dress for dinner, a carriage drove up to the door, and on enquiring of his servant what new visiters were come, Trevelyan was informed that it was the young heir and two other gentlemen with him. As soon as he was dressed, Trevelyan went down stairs in order to be introduced to his cousin, (whom he had not seen since he was quite a child,) before the rest of the party were assembled. On entering the drawing-room, he, however, found many of the guests there already, but Lord St. Ives had not yet made his appearance.

At last, the door leading from Lord Launceston's private apartment opened, and the father and son entered arm-in-arm. "Well, here he is—here he is!" exclaimed the former as he exultingly looked around for the congratulations of all his friends. "And first and foremost, Frederick," said he, beckoning to Trevelyan, "come here to me, that I may regularly introduce you to my boy."

The cousins heartily shook hands, and said and did all that cousins should or could say and do on such an occasion. "Now, have I said too much about him?" demanded the proud parent, as he observed a smile of satisfaction on Trevelyan's countenance, "and I assure you the more you know of him the more you will approve."

"Oh! spare me, my dear sir," said St. Ives, "it is really not fair to begin by making my relations laugh at me, and now that Colonel Trevelyan and I are acquainted, allow me to introduce my two friends to you;" and so

Digitized by Google

saying he went in search of his companions, while Trevelyan turned to speak to Mr. Penrhyn, a distant connexion of the Launceston family, who had also arrived that afternoon at the castle.

They were discussing the young heir's appearance, prospects, and attainments, when suddenly a name caught Trevelyan's attention, which seemed instantly to act like an electric shock upon all his senses; he turned hastily round in hopes that his ears might have deceived him, but was not allowed to doubt another minute, for, as his eyes searched eagerly in the direction from which the sound had proceeded, they fell on the dreaded Lord Herbert Leslie, whom St. Ives was at that moment presenting to his father. Theresa herself did not start more violently on recognising him at the Richmond ball than Trevelyan did now. In vain Mr. Penrhyn continued addressing him; he heard not a word, but continued staring at his hated rival in stupified vexation. Lord Herbert at length turned towards Trevelyan, and, immediately recognising him, accosted him with the familiarity of an acknowledged acquaintance.

"I believe you two need no introduction," said St. Ives, who had, with some surprise, observed Trevelyan to draw back, "for I understand you and my friend Leslie have met before at Richmond."

Trevelyan murmured something about the pleasure and honour of a former acquaintance, but the words seemed to stick in his throat.

"You have been here some time, I believe," said Lord Herbert, with most provoking ease of manner. "I too hoped to have come much sooner, but St. Ives is so dreadfully popular, it was impossible to get him away from his friends before. Miss Howard is quite well, I trust, for I believe she accompanied you into Cornwall?"

Trevelyan dryly assented, and then, taking the first opportunity to disengage himself from his companion, fell back into a more distant part of the room, in order to compose his agitated feelings, and also, unobserved, to judge of the effect produced upon his ward by this unexpected appearance of her admirer.

Before long she entered, accompanied by Miss Tre-

Digitized by Google

velyan. As her quick eyes eagerly glanced round the room, they immediately discovered Lord Herbert, and in their unequivocal expression Trevelyan read the death-warrant to all his happiness. So violent was the agitation occasioned by this sudden apparition, that, for an instant, the blood entirely forsook Theresa's cheeks, but when Lord Herbert, on recognizing her, instantly hastened to her side, it returned with a glow such as Trevelyan had never before witnessed.—His heart sickened—his head became confused—and he stood fixed in his place, unconscious of every thing around him.

He was at last roused from this painful trance by the announcement of dinner, and mechanically followed the rest into the adjoining apartment. Whether Theresa that day looked round for her usual companion we cannot tell, but when Trevelyan, in fearful anxiety to ascertain his fate, glanced his eyes round the table, he beheld her at the further end, Lord Herbert at her side, and her countenance brilliant with happiness. Once, and but once, during dinner, their eyes met:—a burning blush instantly confessed that Theresa was aware of all that his might say—that she merited their keenest approaches. And, in that one hasty glance, they who but a few hours before had appeared to live only for each other now seemed by mutual consent to take a final leave; for Trevelyan never again looked towards her, nor ever, during the evening which followed, approached the spot where she was; Lord Herbert the while so entirely and determinately monopolising her society, that, even had she wished for any intercourse with another, it would have been next to impossible.

What a change had those few hours made in Trevelyan's existence! He had risen that morning, welcoming with gratitude the sun which was to shine on Theresa's beloved countenance, counting the hours of ecstasy which he was to pass at her side; and ere that sun had set, all his hopes of happiness seemed about to set for ever with it, and to leave him in the darkness of despair.

Miss Trevelyan was not blind to all that was now passing: she had with pain observed Theresa's emotion on the appearance of Lord Herbert, and, inexperienced as

Digitized by Google

she was in such matters, she began to suspect that he had made a deeper impression on her young friend's heart than she had before been willing to think possible—and each day, each hour, indeed, now confirmed her fears. She tried every expedient to interrupt the intercourse between them, and attract Theresa's attention to other objects; but it is as easy to stop the impetuous course of a mountain torrent as to check that of passion, when once the soul has unawares yielded to its influence.

Miss Trevelyan even ventured so far as to speak to Theresa on the subject, warning her to be on her guard against a species of admiration, which, often prompted by the mere vanity of him who professes it, only lures into mortification and misery the unconscious dupe to whom it is addressed. But to all this Theresa listened with impatient incredulity; her heart told her a very different tale, and, impelled by a fascination which she was both unwilling and unable to resist, she each day became more and more entangled in the snare, and more estranged from him whose whole soul was devoted to her, and whose heart she was breaking. Theresa could not now but be aware of this, for one single page in the history of love, when perused by ourselves, teaches us volumes as to the feelings of others. He too, whom she was thus afflicting, was one whose heart lay open to her; and who, until her's was engrossed by a more powerful sentiment, had been the object of her dearest affections, her warmest gratitude, and most ardent admiration; one whose superiority to all around she still could not but acknowledge, and whose altered, suffering countenance, whenever it met her eye, occasioned many a pang of remorse to her heart, even while her deluded ear rang with Lord Herbert's professions.

Miss Trevelyan often sought opportunities to speak to her brother, but he shunned all conversation with her nearly as much as with Theresa, for, although what he most dreaded was hearing from her lips a confirmation of his fears, yet, in his present state of mind, he felt that even their contradiction would irritate his feelings. He, therefore, in order to avoid as much as possible all intercourse with those who had but a short time back formed

Digitized by Google

his whole felicity, took violently to every species of country-sport, and thus, in desperation, abandoned the field to his rival.

CHAPTER IX.

The crew with many a mimic strain,
Will mock, perchance, its honest pain;
And thou, bewildered thou,
Drunk with the cup thou long'st to taste,
Ruled by thine evil planet, haste
To spurn a precious vow. *Old Song.*

The whole scene and society at Trevelyan Castle seemed on a sudden to be as much changed since the arrival of Lord St. Ives and his young companions, as Trevelyan himself, and the part which he played in it. Lady Augusta, as mistress of the house, was attentive to the amusement of her guests, but, beyond driving them out in the morning, and setting them down to cards in the evening, she had little power of entertaining them, and the party had, in consequence, been hitherto dull and formal enough. But now all was life and gaiety. Every possible game and pastime was immediately set a-going, and every evening the younger part of the company amused themselves with music and dancing. Augusta had always before herself made up her father's whist-party, but her brother, ridiculing her old-fashioned gravity, and insisting on her joining the dancers, she at last applied to Trevelyan to take her place at the card-table. To refuse was impossible; besides, in his present melancholy mood, he rather welcomed an occupation which afforded him an excuse for silence and abstraction.

Many an evening, therefore, did Trevelyan now thus pass, fixed at his post, while Theresa, in the adjoining room, was freely partaking of that gaiety with which all but himself seemed inspired. At times, when his ear caught the sounds of her well-known voice, or he heard

Digitized by Google

that joyous laugh which had once cheered his very soul, forgetting for a moment all that had occurred, he still experienced a passing thrill of delight; but such flattering illusions were soon dispelled, and a deep-drawn sigh was the sad echo to her light-hearted merriment.

One evening, while the usual whist-party was going on in the inner drawing-room, the dancing in the next seemed suddenly to cease, and at length, even the din of voices dying away, scarcely a sound was to be heard.

"Why, surely St. Ives must be gone to sleep," said Lord Launceston, "and I suppose the whole party has followed his example, for I have not heard the house so quiet since his arrival. What can they be all about?"

In an instant, however, Theresa's rich melodious voice, carolling the Neapolitan "Barcarola," broke the silence. At the first well-known chord of that song, Trevelyan gave such a sudden and violent start, that his hand actually sounded on the table.

"Why, my dear Colonel, what are you about?" said Lord Launceston. "It is not your turn, for you know you are last in hand."

Trevelyan, much confused, hastily took up his card, but the next moment being called upon to play, he again laid it down, without having ever looked at it, or even noticed those already on the board."

"What! no trumps, Frederick?" again exclaimed Lord Launceston, who was his partner. "That's very strange! And now I think of it you must have one, for you were dealer, and this is the first time they have been led;" and Lord Launceston looked in much astonishment at the perturbed countenance of his nephew, who in vain endeavoured, by pressing his hand on his brow, to collect his wandering thoughts, for still those cruel notes rang in his ears, and seemed to deprive him of his senses.

"I suspect you have knocked yourself up shooting, Colonel," continued his uncle, "for I understand you have been out all day, and this passion is new, I think, for I do not remember that you used to be so keen a sportsman; indeed, till St. Ives came, you appeared contented with the more quiet occupation of gallanting the ladies when they went out riding. But I suspect," he

Digitized by Google

added laughing, "that Miss Howard has found another squire—hey? It is no business of mine," he continued, "but I must say I think your young lady seems to be but a dangerous sort of person in society, as she appears to have a prodigious turn for what is called flirting."

Trevelyan said nothing, pretending to be wholly engrossed by the game, but continued to make all sorts of strange blunders.

"Well, my good friend," said his uncle to him when the party broke up, "I certainly cannot compliment you on your skill at cards to-night, and yet, I should say, that whist is a sort of hereditary game in our family. My father was a capital player, and I must confess I think it a very gentlemanlike amusement, and one in which no one need be ashamed to excel. But come, let us now go and see what these madcaps are doing in the next room."

So saying, Lord Launceston took his nephew's arm, and led him towards the piano-forte, at which Theresa was still seated, Lord Herbert at her side. This was more than Trevelyan could endure, and suddenly disengaging himself from his uncle, he left the apartment before she was even aware of his presence.

In the hall he was met by his sister—she eagerly came up to him, and taking his arm, "Come to my room, Frederick," said she, "for I want to speak to you, and I never now can have an opportunity."

"I know what you would say," said he, drawing away. "I know it all but too well, so spare me, I implore you." Still Miss Trevelyan urged him to a few minutes' conversation, and he at last complied.

"Frederick," said she, as soon as they had reached her apartment, "let us immediately return to Richmond—I see the misery you are enduring. But perhaps, it may still not be too late, for believe me, it is but a momentary infatuation, which will pass away and be forgotten; and indeed, I must say, you are yourself very much to blame, for why do you so entirely withdraw yourself, and quietly abandon Theresa to your rival?"

"Because, Louisa," said he, with vehemence, "my heart is too proud to dispute her's with another—too weak

Digitized by Google

to combat with her very evident partiality for that other. Besides, what can I say to her, of which she is not fully aware already. I surely need not now tell her what she must long since have read in my every look and action —that my whole soul—my very existence is her's. Is such an affection as mine to be expressed by common-place compliments and empty protestations? No, no, if her own heart does not yet plead for me, it is useless to plead for myself."

"Then let us immediately leave this place," said Miss Trevelyan, hastily interrupting him, "and rescue Theresa from the danger to which she is exposed; I will make any excuse you like for returning home—plead illness—take it all, in short, on myself."

"No, no," replied Trevelyan, "we cannot possibly go away till after the celebration of St. Ives' birthday; but that event will now take place in a very few days—and then—Heaven knows what then may happen!"

"Oh! Theresa will then soon forget all this bewildering adulation," resumed Miss Trevelyan; "her head is certainly at this minute turned by it, yet I cannot but hope that her natural good sense will finally get the better, and that this foolish fancy of her's will again die away, as it did before, when no longer in Lord Herbert's society; for after all it is merely one of those passing flirtations which any inexperienced girl may be drawn into."

"No, Louisa," rejoined Trevelyan with quickness; "it is no passing flirtation; would to heaven I could hope it were! I could almost add, would to heaven I could think so poorly of her as to believe it to be possible! but I can read her very inmost soul, and there trace but too plainly the strong, the indelible characters of passion."

And Trevelyan was right—Theresa was no flirt. She was too artless even to attempt to conceal with what heartfelt pleasure she received Lord Herbert's attentions, but she as decidedly showed she cared for no other. And her vanity had been put to many a trial; for even St. Ives, captivated by her beauty and fascinating manners, soon entered the lists against his friend, and so boldly, that many a bet was laid that the light-hearted young

Digitized by Google

heir of all those rich domains would undoubtedly remain conqueror.

But those who thus judged of Theresa by the common calculations of the world had to pay for their want of discernment, for, after a short ineffectual contest, St. Ives, in despair of success, relinquished the prize to his more favoured antagonist, and thus relieved his father from the most dreadful anxiety; for, ever on the watch with regard to what concerned his family importance, Lord Launceston had soon taken alarm on observing his son's admiration for the illegitimate orphan, and was beginning to tremble for the as yet untainted Right Honourble blood of the Trevelyans.

The day at length arrived on which the young heir's majority was to be celebrated; the sun shone with peculiar brightness, the bells rang gaily, and from early morn all was preparation and bustle. The tenants and their families were to partake of a plentiful repast on the lawn before the house, where tents had been pitched for that purpose. Oxen were roasted whole, barrels of ale flowed in all directions, and, in short, every species of old English hospitality and profusion, usual on such occasions, was liberally displayed. By two o'clock the whole front of the house presented a gay scene of joy and festivity, all the company then at the castle being assembled on the great flight of steps to witness the sight. As soon as the solid part of the repast was over, the health of the young heir was of course drunk with three times three and every demonstration of joy. As Lord Launceston heard the shouts of all around, and felt in consequence that emotion which a parent must on such occasions feel, he, unwilling to attribute the general enthusiasm in any degree to the effects of beef and ale, seemed to forget that there were other peers, or heirs to peerages, besides himself and his son; and in fancied superiority he looked proudly around for the congratulations of his friends, and the adulation of his dependants; in short, to use the phraseology of the East, the loud hurras entering in at the gate of his titles, proceeded up the long avenue of his ancestors and thus reaching his heart, brought tears to his eyes. Of course the health of Lord Laun-

Digitized by Google

ceston and the Lady Augusta followed, and were noticed with due honours.

A pause then took place in the toast-giving business of the day; and St. Ives, leaving his father's side, joined the party in the tent, where, after a short parley between him and the land-steward who had hitherto presided at the festive board, he took his place at the head of the table. All now looked with increased spirit to their young Lord. "Come, my friends," said he, "a bumper up to the brim, for I am going to give you a toast, in which I am sure you will all most heartily join." There was a moment's dead silence, St. Ives holding his glass in the air. Then, while his cheek crimsoned with emotion, he called aloud—

"Colonel Trevelyan, and the brave army of England!"

Whether the additional glasses of good home-brewed ale which had been quaffed since the last health was given had added to the general excitement, or whether the hearts of Englishmen are always most powerfully affected by any reference to the services of their gallant countrymen, we cannot pretend to say, but the cheers which followed this toast were still more loud, more reiterated, and more enthusiastic, than any of those which had preceded it, and young St. Ives, now standing on his chair, encouraged the joyous din by his hearty vehemence. Every inhabitant of the castle and neighbourhood having been assembled, in order to be present at this long looked-for fête, Theresa and Trevelyan were of course both among the number, and as these shouts rent the air, forgetting in the pride of the moment what had lately occurred, and her heart swelling with grateful affection towards the object of all this enthusiasm, Theresa instinctively looked round towards her guardian. Their eyes met—his too were moistened with emotion—but his cheek was pale, his lip quivered, and, shrinking hastily back among the crowd, he disappeared in a moment.

"Where is he? where is Colonel Trevelyan?" shouted the gay St. Ives. "What a shabby dog not to show himself, and face his well deserved honours! A price on his head; dead or alive bring him before me."

Digitized by Google

But no Trèvelyan appeared, and he was searched for in vain.

"I know this is quite according to the new school of military modesty," said Lord Herbert to Theresa with a smile of contempt. "But for *modesty*, in such cases, I would read *pride*, abominable selfish pride. Why should Colonel Trevelyan be above returning thanks for the hearty expressions of good-will and respect from these honest people; not to mention St. Ives' very flattering compliment to him? Why seem to take offence at these distinctions which, after all, every military man is prodigiously affronted if he does not obtain?"

Theresa's accusing heart told her that the strong emotion which she had seen painted in Trevelyan's countenance was the effect neither of pride nor humility, but that she herself had been its cause; and this unjust attack upon one whom she loved and admired, although made by Lord Herbert himself, roused all her better feelings. "You little know Colonel Trevelyan," said she warmly, her heart still beating with emotion; "if you can suppose him capable of any other feelings than those of kindness and good-will to every one."

"No, indeed, I certainly do not know him," replied Lord Herbert sarcastically, "if *your* description of him is a true one, for kindness and good-will are certainly not what I have ever experienced from him; on the contrary, from the very first he has treated me with the most marked coldness and dislike—met me armed with prejudice against me, and all this without the slighest cause, or any provocation on my part whatever, except, indeed, that I have presumed, (if that is a crime) 'to gaze on the same bright particular star,' and to admire what he admires; for such is his reserve, (as you call it) in other words, his pride and selfishness, that it seems he expects to monopolise to himself every thing that is charming, and will allow no one to have ears or eyes but himself: now is it not so, Miss Howard?"

Theresa was silent. She was well aware of the full meaning of these words, but, her best feelings being just then uppermost, her thoughts in self-condemnation still dwelt on the ghastly smile and contracted brow which

Digitized by Google

had spoken such daggers to her heart, and she was, in consequence, at the moment half inclined to be angry even with Lord Herbert.

Her stricken conscience had given her the true interpretation of Trevelyan's feelings. Amid the joyousness which surrounded him, he had thought so little of himself as likely to have any individual concern in the scene, that, when his own name and the shouts which followed it suddenly sounded in his ears, he was for an instant bewildered, and, impelled by the emotion of the moment, naturally turned towards her who had now for so long been associated in his mind with his every feeling of personal pride and exultation. When his eyes, then, met those of Theresa fixed upon him, and he fancied he read in them the kindest expression of affection, a gleam of happiness for an instant again flashed over his soul; but the sight of his hated rival at her side as quickly dissolved the momentary illusion, and the revulsion of feeling which he then experienced was more than he could endure. He forcibly made his way through the crowd, and long before the sounds of the reiterated cheers had died away, dashing down a path which led to the wood, he was lost in its solitude, giving free vent to the bitterness of his soul.

Every one surely must have experienced at some period or other of their lives the almost unbearable effect of such an exciting scene, as that at which Trevelyan had just been present, when the mind is suffering from some secret sorrow. For each gay shout of enthusiasm which strikes the ear, then vibrates painfully on the heart, and only rouses it to a keener sense of its own wretchedness. So it was with Trevelyan; and, not having courage again to expose himself to the trial, he wandered about alone till dinner-time, a prey to the most gloomy reflections. Every path, every road, every habitation, seemed totally deserted; and had it not been for the faint sound of the distant hilarity occasionally borne on the wind, and still more for the painful impression left on his mind, the gay busy scene at which he had so lately been present would have appeared to him as the mere phantasy of a dream.

He did not enter the dining-room until the company

Digitized by Google

had assembled, when he at once took possession of the first vacant chair; and, chance placing him at a different table from that at which Theresa and Lord Herbert were seated, and where St. Ives presided, he thus avoided all remarks on his sudden disappearance in the morning. Luckily too for him the party that day was so large that it was not difficult to avoid observation. More than once, at the beginning of dinner, Theresa had inquired after Trevelyan, for she felt him as a weight at her heart; but when relieved from all actual anxiety about him by hearing that he was in the dining-room, her mind then returned to the joyous scene in which she was engaged; and when thus placed at the side of him to whom her whole soul was devoted, and to whom she was conscious of being the object of the most ardent admiration—was it wonderful that, before long, she again thought no more of her absent friend?

As soon as the repast was over, Trevelyan had again recourse to his solitary walk, finding a strange sort of pleasure in the nervous shiver which crept over his frame, when exposed to the keen night air, as he felt it to be in chilling unison with the misery of his heart. The lateness of the hour at length warned him to return to the house. As he approached it, he beheld each window glittering with the gay illumination within and without, and heard the sounds of music and dancing. Half ashamed of his sullenness, he entered the ball-room, and, concealing himself amid the crowd of spectators, looked anxiously around for her whose image had never once that day been absent from his mind. But although he examined each set of dancers, still Theresa was no where to be seen. He crossed the ball-room, and entered the adjoining apartment; near the door he suddenly discovered her, and his sister at her side. He was nearly close to them before he was aware of their vicinity; and now, actually startled at the sight of the very person who had been the object of his eager search, he stood fixed to the spot without courage either to advance or retire.

Miss Trevelyan seemed in earnest conversation with her companion, whose eyes were fixed on the ground, but whose countenance and demeanour plainly indicated agi-

Digitized by Google

tation and embarrassment. Oh, how Trevelyan longed to read in her heart, and ascertain whether it was one feeling of compunction, of pity, for his sufferings which then saddened her lovely brow. Still their conversation continued, and at length Miss Trevelyan, speaking with increased earnestness, but in so low a voice that he could not catch the words, laid her hand on her young friend's arm. Theresa raised her head as if to reply, but as she then turned her eyes towards Miss Trevelyan, they fell upon her guardian. At the sight of him, she instantly averted her face, and, the next minute covering it with her hand, she abruptly rose from her seat, and left the room.

Miss Trevelyan, who had not observed her brother's entrance, and who was therefore ignorant of the cause of this sudden flight, immediately followed, leaving him bewildered by contending feelings; at one minute resolving to seek his ward, and demand the explanation of an emotion, which, in spite of himself, had again revived his hopes; at another, almost tempted, in the character of her guardian, to speak to Lord Herbert, and thus bring his own fate to a crisis.

Above an hour elapsed, and still neither Theresa nor his sister appeared. Trevelyan at length returned to the ball-room, and, at the further end, seated in the recess of a window, he immediately distinguished the object of his anxious thoughts. Lord Herbert was at her side, and he seemed to be earnestly expostulating with her, while Theresa, with her eyes fixed on the ground, listened in agitated abstraction. Trevelyan felt that he now needed no further explanation, and, hastily leaving the scene of gaiety, he took refuge in the solitude of his own room.

Few of the performers in the entertainment, which was protracted to a late hour, appeared at breakfast next morning, and, on inquiring for his sister, Trevelyan was informed that she was too unwell to leave her bed. He and Theresa did not meet till dinner-time, when not a word, not a look, was exchanged between them; indeed, as if by mutual consent, they both seemed to avoid all possibility of intercourse. Determined on concealing, if possible, the state of his mind, Trevelyan assumed a gaiety

Digitized by Google

which he certainly did not feel, and, the better to play his self-imposed part, freely joined in the hilarity all around. More than once Theresa was startled by his unusually elevated voice and unnatural laughter; for such false spirits could not deceive her, whatever they might others, as she was but too well aware both of their nature and cause. At each burst of forced merriment, a pang of remorse shot through her heart; but still she had not courage to free herself from the bondage of passion, and cease to torture one whom yet she loved with even more than a sister's tenderness.

The whole party that evening declared themselves to be too completely knocked up by the fatigues of the preceding day to attempt any active amusements. Some took to their books, over which they slumbered; others yawned through the newspapers, or lounged in total idleness on the sofas. Trevelyan was, as usual, summoned by Lady Augusta to her father's whist table, and Lord Herbert challenged Theresa at chess. The men were all set in due order, and the game began, but, though the hands of both combatants shaded their brows in the attitude of deep calculation, it was soon very evident that the game before them had ceased to be the object of speculation, and that it was no longer to his *enemy's King* that Lord Herbert was offering *check*. His eyes were eagerly fixed on the varying countenance of his antagonist, as in unconscious abstraction, she hurried the monarch of the board from place to place, with a degree of indecorous activity, which would have made Philidor's hair stand on end.

Such was the position of the game when the whist-party broke up, and one glance at the supposed contending chess-players sufficed to inform Trevelyan that his doom was finally sealed.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER X.

Farewell thou false fair, whom I will not upbraid,
I've loved thee too long to be loud when betrayed;
Live rage in the bosom where triumph could reign,
When I trusted thy smiles, I was happy, not vain;
My peace thou hast injured, not wounded my pride,
And affection as yet cannot learn to subside. *Old Song.*

Miss Trevelyan was so much indisposed for some days after the birthday festivities, as to be unable to leave her room, and her brother felt too well convinced that neither of them could have anything agreeable to communicate to the other, to run the risk of uselessly agitating her by seeking an interview. Hearing, however, at length that she was much better, he repaired one morning to her apartment in order to make some arrangements with her respecting their return home, the day on which they had fixed for leaving Trevelyan Castle being now nearly arrived.

On opening the door Trevelyan started back, for the first object which met his eyes was Theresa—and Theresa alone!—She changed colour and seemed much embarrassed, but, after a moment's silence, while still continuing to stoop over the table as if much engaged in folding up some letters, "Miss Trevelyan," said she, "is a great deal better to-day; she is gone down to speak to Lady Augusta, but will, I dare say, be back directly."

Trevelyan stood for a minute at the door, irresolute what to do; but at last he entered and closed it after him. It was many a day since he and Theresa had been *tête-à-tête;* many a day, indeed, since they had even spoken to each other, and the hearts of both beat nearly to suffocation. There was a dead silence for some minutes. At length Theresa appearing in some degree to recover herself, although speaking with unusual hurry, said, "Treevy is gone, I believe, to ask Lord Launceston to

Digitized by Google

alter a frank which he has by mistake dated for the second, to-day being the third of April."

"The third of April," repeated Trevelyan with quickness; "true, true, so it is," and there was again a pause. "Theresa!" said he at length in an agitated tone, "are you aware of what event this day is the anniversary?"

"No," she replied, somewhat astonished at his question, "I did not know that the third of April was marked by any particular circumstance." And she spoke truly, for to poor Theresa, who was the solitary child of sin and shame, the anniversary of her birth had hitherto been a blank in the calendar. Her natal day had never been marked to her as one of joy and congratulation; she had never been the happy heroine of a little yearly fête, had never on that day received a grateful mother's blessing.

"It is *your* birthday, Theresa," continued Trevelyan; "you are now eighteen, you are of age—released from my control," he added with a bitter smile.

Theresa's colour went and came, and her eyes filled with tears; Trevelyan for an instant fixed his upon her, but she did not speak, and he was again silent. It needed not words however to prove that the same feelings at that moment occupied them both, for it was evident that the thoughts of each had instantly reverted to that day when, a year before, Theresa had first been informed of her father's wishes and dispositions respecting her, and that they both also well remembered with what different feelings they had then dwelt on the last clause in his will. That clause, which seemed almost to bestow upon Trevelyan a right to claim her as his own, in the sacred character of a husband; that clause, to which she had then listened in such unsuspecting ignorance of all the pangs which it might entail either on herself or her guardian.

Theresa walked hastily to the window to conceal her emotion, while Trevelyan, heaving a deep-drawn sigh, leaned his head against the mantel-piece. He felt as if he must now at length break silence and at once confess the feelings of his bursting heart. But, alas! what could he expect to hear in return, except that of which he was already but too certain? And why, therefore, while exposed to the unfeeling observation of many, add to the

Digitized by Google

already miserable constraint of their intercourse by a useless disclosure, which might hasten, but apparently could not now alter the fate of either?

These considerations made him resolve on still persevering for a time in that reserve to which he had hitherto, on principle, adhered. He again turned towards Theresa, who stood gazing vacantly from the window in evident dread of encountering his eyes. "I suppose you are aware," he continued, "that we propose leaving this the day after to-morrow? I trusted to my sister for informing you. Would to heaven we had never come!" he added with vehemence. "For *her* sake I mean—for *she*, at all events, has not benefited by the expedition; her health is not equal to the fatiguing life of bustle which is here led, and it is therefore on *her* account that I do not wish to prolong our stay.

Theresa signified, by an acquiescing motion of her head, that she was content with the arrangement; but Trevelyan saw big tears following each other down her cheeks. Were they for his rival? Were they tears of contrition for all the misery she was inflicting on himself? Some minutes elapsed, still those tears continued to flow: at last she covered her face with her hands, and Trevelyan heard her endeavouring, but in vain, to stifle her sobs. Oh! how ardently did he then long to invite her back to that fearless confidence which had once been his happiness—to that full reliance on his affection which had seemed once to constitute her's! Trevelyan left his place and approached Theresa, but before he had reached her side the image of Lord Herbert seemed to rush between them, and that image so adored by the one, so hated by the other, closed the hearts and lips of both.

Just then Miss Trevelyan entered, and Theresa, taking advantage of the supposed private business which had brought Colonel Trevelyan to his sister's apartment, hastily brushed away her tears, and left them togother. Miss Trevelyan immediately perceived that something painful had occurred; she kindly took her brother's hand, and gave him all the comfort in her power, bidding him trust to the effects of separation, and to the probable transient nature of Lord Herbert's fancy for his ward; for she

Digitized by Google

was, she said, convinced that he was not what is called a marrying man; that he could, therefore, have no object in pursuing the acquaintance, and that, when once they had left Trevelyan Castle, there was little chance of their ever again coming in each other's way. She concluded, therefore, by proposing an immediate departure, declaring herself to be now quite equal to the journey, and urging that they should keep to their first intended day for setting out.

That day at last, to Trevelyan's inexpressible relief, arrived; he anxiously watched Theresa and her lover, in order to ascertain the state of their feelings, and to form some idea of the degree of understanding which existed between them. Not a word was exchanged at parting, but the silence only confirmed his fears as to their mutual intelligence.

The gay St. Ives had many a mysterious, significant joke with Theresa on taking leave of her, and expressed unfeigned regret at the departure of his cousins. Lord Launceston trusted that before long he should have the honour of another visit from those so nearly related to him; and the Lady Augusta, relaxing somewhat from her usual coldness and formality, shook Miss Trevelyan cordially by the hand, and in a most flattering manner invited her cousin Frederick to visit them without delay in town, where she and her father were, before long, to take up their residence for the season. Trevelyan, having signified his intention of travelling outside, his sister and Theresa entered the carriage, and they drove off amid the kissing of hands and waving of hats of the party assembled on the steps of the house.

How different did the journey now appear, when retracing the same road, from what it had been but a few weeks before, when they had gaily travelled it together in hope and cordiality! Theresa, pretending to be entirely engrossed by a novel which she had borrowed for the journey, seldom took her eyes from the page before her, except to stare vacantly out of the carriage-window, when an occasional tear, which she hastily wiped away, stole down her cheek. Miss Trevelyan, on her part, suffering in body and depressed in spirits, was as little disposed for

Digitized by Google

conversation as her companion, so that mile after mile was now travelled by them in unbroken silence. During the three melancholy days which their journey occupied, Trevelyan, after much torturing rumination on the subject, resolved at last on bringing his fate to a crisis by seeking (as soon as they should arrive at Richmond) that full explanation of Theresa's sentiments which he had hitherto so carefully avoided. But as he drove up to what had so lately been to him such a happy home, and thought on the trial which probably there awaited him, his courage nearly gave way, and fear and doubt got the better of all his resolutions. The very sight of those well-known lovely scenes, now again newly dressed in the first fresh green of spring, helped to divert him from his purpose. Was it possible that, when all around was still so bright, so placid, so lovely, the moral world within could be so totally changed? Might it not all be some dreadful phantasy of his brain, from which, when restored to what had hitherto been to him an earthly paradise, he should again awaken and find the happiness he had left?

When the carriage stopped, Trevelyan, still half bewildered by these contending feelings, sprang from it in order to assist his companions to alight. One glance in Theresa's countenance, however, as she darted past him, sufficed to recall his senses to the sad reality of his situation; for this return to her home had evidently affected her not less than himself. She hurried into the house, equally regardless of the joyous welcome of little Oscar, and the smiling obeisances of the servants—and, springing up stairs, took immediate refuge from observation in the solitude of her own room. Trevelyan was now finally resolved. He paced the garden for some time in abstracted agitation, and then, his heart and head both throbbing with nervous agitation, he hastened to his own apartment, and there wrote the following letter to Theresa:—

"It is vain any longer to make a secret of the state of my mind. Indeed, I fear your own heart must now but too well assist you in reading mine. I will no longer conceal from you that I have long loved you—

Digitized by Google

not as a father—not as a guardian—but as the most passionate, devoted of lovers. Honour has restrained me from sooner making this declaration, and now, I fear, it comes too late. But surely it did not require words to make you aware of the devotion of my heart? Perhaps I was wrong—vain—led away and deceived by my wishes; but at one time I could not help indulging in the blessed hope of a return. You were once kind to me, Theresa—you once confided in me; but now all is changed, and we seem to have become total strangers to each other.

"There is no use, however, in upbraiding or recurring to the past. You have now my fate, my very existence, in your hands. If still it were possible that my jealous fancy could have deceived me to my present misery—if still your affection should be ——. Oh! answer me, Theresa—one word, and I am the happiest of beings; one word, and my lips are closed for ever, never again to pain you by the avowal of feelings which you cannot return."

With a trembling hand Trevelyan sealed and directed this note; then ringing for the servant he bade him take it directly to Miss Howard. When the door was shut, and he heard John's footsteps on the stairs, leading to Theresa's apartment, a cold sweat bedewed his forehead. It seemed to him as if he was thus hastening his fate—voluntarily plunging himself into despair.—He paced up and down his room in nervous agitation, listening to every sound, and more than once hurried to the door, fancying he heard some one approaching.

An hour elapsed, and still no answer came.—He rang the bell with increased perturbation, and desired that Miss Howard's maid might go to her and inquire whether she had any letter for him. There was another long interval.—At length he heard a gentle knock at the door—he concluded it was the maid bringing him the long-wished for, but dreaded, reply, and he bade her enter.—The door slowly opened—and Theresa herself appeared.—Her face at once told him his fate—she was deadly pale, and her eyes were red with weeping. She rushed up to

Digitized by Google

him, and falling on her knees by the couch into which he had sunk, she buried her face in her hands, and sobbed aloud.

Much as Trevelyan had anticipated the end of all his hopes; fully prepared, as he thought he was, for the truth, yet the blow stunned him, and he stared wildly at her, unable to speak or move! They thus remained for a minute in total silence. At length holding out a letter towards Trevelyan, "This will explain all to you," said Theresa, in a faltering voice, and then clasping her hands in an agony of grief and remorse, "Oh! forgive me! forgive me!" she exclaimed, "for being the involuntary cause of sufferings which, believe me, are not greater than my own."

Still Trevelyan did not speak, and he averted his face to conceal the tears which bitter disappointment wrung from his manly heart. At length, making an effort to subdue his agitation, and taking her hand, as if in token of pardon, while he endeavoured to raise her from the ground, "I understand you, Theresa," said he, in a low broken voice; "so leave me—for God's sake leave me—in a short time I shall be better—I will then speak to you—but now I cannot," and he again convulsively pressed her hand.

Theresa rose to obey him, but the sight of his affliction quite overpowered her, and she still remained as if spellbound at his side, feeling at that minute as if she could have renounced Lord Herbert, and all her most romantic visions of felicity, to make Trevelyan happy. Again he stammered out his entreaties to be left alone, and at last, conscience stricken, torn by contending passions, she complied with his request, and returned to her own apartment.

When there, her sufferings were in truth fully equal to those of her guardian, for they were sharpened by remorse. She felt that she had wounded and deceived one from whom she had received every kindness, whose heart was devoted to her, and on whose steady affection through good report and evil report she might ever have relied.

In the violence of her remorse, and the virtuous zeal of the moment, Theresa again fancied that she had come to

Digitized by Google

the resolution of giving up her own happiness in order to secure that of her guardian; and with a flushed cheek and throbbing heart, she actually rose from her seat in order to complete the sacrifice, by the voluntary renunciation of Lord Herbert. But ere she had reached the door, his image rushed to her imagination, and with it returned all those enthusiastic feelings of love and admiration with which he had inspired her; little indeed did Theresa know her own weakness, when even contemplating the possibility of such self-devotion; little was she aware of the overpowering influence of passion on a mind so undisciplined as hers.

In about an hour another packet was brought her from Trevelyan; on breaking the seal she found it contained the letter, which she had at their recent interview put into his hands. That letter was, as may be supposed, from Lord Herbert, being the passionate declaration of love and constancy, by which he had, the morning of Theresa's departure from Trevelyan Castle, confirmed his former professions of devotion, and her own rapturous expectations; at the end of the letter she had herself added these few words addressed to Trevelyan, "I have referred him to my guardian for a *final* answer."

After having again and again feasted her eyes on the adored characters in this letter of her lover's, notwithstanding every word they formed was already known by heart, and every sentiment those words expressed engraven on her soul; Theresa, with a passionate sigh, was returning it to the envelope, when some writing within, which she had not before observed, caught her eye. It was evidently her guardian's, but so changed, it was with difficulty that she deciphered the words, which were to this effect.

"Let your mind be at rest; trust to me, I will do all in my power to secure your happiness. I intend immediately to leave home for a short time, therefore do not let any repugnance at the idea of meeting me, when in my present agitated state of feeling, prevent you from joining my sister as usual. She knows all, for I thought you might wish to be spared the pain of informing her of

Digitized by Google

what has passed between us. You may therefore speak to her on the subject, or not, as you like best.

F. T."

"Excellent! generous Trevelyan," exclaimed Theresa, as she read these words, and again all her self-upbraidings and doubts returned; but need it be added, that love —all powerful love, again interposed, and finally triumphed. Theresa delayed leaving her own apartment as long as possible, but being at length informed that dinner was ready, and knowing that Miss Trevelyan was now alone, she felt obliged to join her. She entered the room with the feelings of a criminal, not daring even to look towards her friend; and never since that day, on which Theresa had first been received under her hospitable roof, had their *tête-à-tête* repast been eaten in such comfortless silence.

When at last Theresa ventured to raise her eyes towards her dear Treevy, the sight, of her's red and heavy with recent tears, gave a fresh pang to her heart, for she could well guess at their cause, and again took herself to task for thus afflicting all those who had been most kind to her. The instant dinner was over the friends separated, not a word having passed between them with reference to that subject which filled both their minds, and Theresa hastily escaped to the garden, hoping that the fresh air might compose her nerves and cool her aching head. But there every object which she saw brought to her recollection some trait of her guardian's kindness, and again renewed the struggle between love and gratitude; for her mind recurred to those peaceful evenings when a few months back, before a stronger feeling had taken possession of her soul, she in happiness and contentment had wandered with her two friends on the lovely Thames, marking with pleasure returning cheerfulness on Miss Trevelyan's countenance. That much-loved countenance—now again saddened, and by her means! She remembered too (and now full well understood) each trait of devoted affection on the part of Trevelyan; the expression of his eyes when fixed upon her while she

Digitized by Google

sang his favourite songs, or when, in mock contention, they had gaily argued some disputed point.

But then another actor in the scene rose to her imagination. The unknown boatman!—he who, from that moment when he first heard her voice, and through the twilight caught a glimpse of her features, had sought her with such flattering perseverance.

For it was not chance that day after day directed his little shallop beneath their garden wall; it was not chance that brought him to Sir Henry Williams's, to the ball, and, finally, to Trevelyan Castle. And much more than all this, would his enterprising passion have attempted to win the valued prize, had he not seen that she was under the guardianship of a sentinel whose jealous vigilance would have taken quick alarm at any open premature attack, and with whom, therefore, it was necessary to be cautious.

How resist such devotion? proceeding too from one gifted by nature with every attraction calculated to turn a young head. Thus the reverie, of which the kind, the generous Trevelyan had been the original object, had soon Lord Herbert alone for its hero, and terminated in all those vague, rapturous anticipations of perfect happiness, into which the young are ever deceived by passion.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XI.

Well! thou art happy, and I feel
That I should thus be happy too;
For still my heart regards thy weal
Warmly, as it was wont to do.

Thy lover's blest, and 'twill impart
Some pangs to view his happier lot;
But let them pass—Oh! how my heart
Would hate him if he loved thee not! *Byron.*

It was a dark, stormy evening: the wind blew chilly down the river, ruffling its usually smooth waters, and whistling dismally through the rigging of a barge moored close below the garden. No cheerful Twickenham bells, no notes of distant music, met the ear; no gaily-freighted wherries cut through the stream; but all seemed gloomy and deserted. A cold, nervous shiver crept over Theresa's frame. "Where shall I be at this time next year?" she ejaculated to herself, with that restless desire to look into futurity which a new and strong interest always inspires. "With whom?" she would have added, had not remorse checked the rising inquiry, for she was conscious that her hopes placed another than Trevelyan at her side!

Thus, lost in thought, she remained leaning on the wall of the garden, watching the scudding clouds, until they broke over her head, and she was driven in by the rain. She found Miss Trevelyan sitting before an almost extinguished fire, the faint glare of which alone lighted the room. She started at the sound of the opening door, and seemed to endeavour to rouse herself from her sad reverie. "Ring the bell, my love," she said directly, "that we may have candles, for it is such a dismal evening, we had better shut it out, and try and forget it."

But Theresa, instead of obeying, silently stole towards her, and then, throwing herself into the arms of her be-

Digitized by Google

nefactress, burst into tears. Miss Trevelyan wept also, as she fondly kissed the flushed cheek of her on whom she had liberally bestowed the warm feelings of a heart which had so longed for an object on which to rest,—of her whom she had loved even with a mother's tenderness,—and who, she once thought, would have secured her brother's happiness, and cheered her own declining years.

For some time neither spoke. Theresa was kneeling before her friend, having hidden her face on her knees. "Oh, forgive me!" she at length exclaimed; "forgive an apparently ungrateful wretch—and be still my friend—help me, advise me. In pity speak to me," she continued, passionately clinging to Miss Trevelyan, who had still remained silent.

Observing the excessive agitation of the poor girl, Miss Trevelyan, as well as she could, checked her own feelings. "Calm yourself, Theresa," she said, in a kind tone of voice; "and do not be so unjust both to yourself and to me, as to think I can be unreasonable enough to *blame* you for what has happened. God knows, it is myself whom I take to task. For now—when too late, alas!—I see my error. I should have foreseen all this.—But, exempt as I was in my youth from those trials to which your peculiar situation and attractions exposed you, I have been to you a useless friend! Heaven in kindness imposed on me one responsibility—gave me one duty—and I neglected it—for it was I who should have defended you from those dangers which so particularly threatened one of your ardent character—but, instead of that, alas! I seem to have abandoned you to your fate! So, indeed Theresa, it is I who should ask forgiveness of you."

"Dearest, dearest Treevy," said she, "you will break my heart by talking in this manner. It was no fault of yours, but that of your wilful child, who allowed herself to be led blindfold into a course which has made her appear the most ungrateful of wretches: or rather it was, indeed, from the very first, a power she could not resist."

"You say true, Theresa," rejoined Miss Trevelyan with solemnity. "There is indeed a power we cannot

Digitized by Google

resist, which overrules our destiny, and to that power I submit. Theresa, pray for him whose heart is broken—for him who now thinks but of your happiness—in whom *self* is dead. He bade me tell you to set your mind at rest—that he was going to busy himself in bringing about, if possible, your heart's desire. His last words to me were, 'Be kind to Theresa; tell her that if it is in her guardian's power to secure her felicity, no being on earth shall be so blest.'"

Theresa's renewed sobs were her only reply.

"Had you but duly valued him," continued Miss Trevelyan; "had you but fully known the noble heart which was devoted to you!—But there is no use in recurring to what might have been," she added, with a deep sigh. "May you be happy! May I but see my poor brother restored to peace of mind, and I will contentedly give up for myself those interests in life—that solace—to which—" Miss Trevelyan's voice became choked with emotion, and she stopped short; then, after a moment's pause, recovering herself, "Leave me, dearest Theresa, now," said she, in a feeble voice; "go to your own room, and compose yourself. I am fatigued—not well—and the agitations of to-day have quite overcome me. To-morrow I shall be better, but to-night I am unequal to any conversation, and wish to be alone."

Still Theresa remained on her knees before her. "Do not," she eagerly exclaimed, "do not think me such a wretch as not properly to value a character, a heart, only too good for me. If you knew the gratitude, the admiration, which I feel for your brother; but———"

"We will talk no more now," said Miss Trevelyan, again interrupting her, and raising her from the ground; "so good night, Theresa, may God bless you! And now go and seek some rest, for I am sure your poor swollen eyes need it, and your wounded heart must need it also as well as mine."

Several days passed, and this painful subject was not renewed. Miss Trevelyan's nerves seemed to have been already so much shaken, that Theresa was fearful of adverting to what might again agitate them. She heard nothing from her guardian, nothing from her lover—and all

Digitized by Google

cheerfulness at home was gone. "Hope deferred makes the heart sick,"—and Theresa's turned in disgust from all those interests and amusements which had formerly made the hours glide by so quickly. The pianoforte was never opened—the broken strings of her guitar were left unrepaired—the open book before her remained unread.

"This suspense, Theresa, is, I know, hard to bear," at length said Miss Trevelyan, one day, after having for some time gazed on the fixed, absent countenance of her companion; "but still I say, trust to my brother. The evening he left us, I know he intended to return at once to Trevelyan Castle, in search of St. Ives; he is, you know, Lord Herbert's particular friend, therefore, we need not fear any very unfavourable report from *him*," added Miss Trevelyan, with an encouraging smile. "We could not possibly yet have heard from Frederick, and, as for Lord Herbert, you know he told you in his letter that nearly a week must elapse before he could receive his father's answer, and till he does, every thing forbids his again addressing you: so that I honour him for his silence; therefore, cheer up, dear Theresa, and let me again see one of those smiles which used to be such a cordial to my heart."

Day, however, followed day, and still no letter came, while Theresa became hourly more and more absent and dejected. Unequal to any occupation, she passed the weary hours in restless abstraction, listening to every sound, and staring vacantly from the window of her apartment on the road beneath, in the vague expectation of what—or whom—she could hardly have told.

At length, one day, while stationed at her usual post, she suddenly gave a start, and all her blood seemed to rush from her heart to her cheeks; for she saw two persons walking hastily down the road towards the house; and *one* was so like—so very like!—she eagerly looked at his companion! It must be—it *was*—Trevelyan—leaning on Lord Herbert's arm

Theresa's heart beat nearly to suffocation, and, half fainting, she drew back from the window—The door-bell rang—presently she was summoned down stairs.—Her trembling limbs could scarcely support her—the door of

Digitized by Google

the drawing-room was open—some one came hastily forward to meet her and took her hand;—it was Trevelyan!

"I have brought you no unwelcome visiter, I believe," said he in a tone which endeavoured at cheerfulness, but whose altered accents made her shudder, and he led her on. He placed her hand in that of another, and then in a hurried manner saying, "I need not apologise for leaving you for a few minutes to go in search of my sister," he rushed out of the room.

All this had been so sudden, so unexpected, that Theresa felt bewildered, and in a dream; her head swam round, and she sank into a chair; but in an instant the well-known accents of a beloved voice recalled her wandering senses, for Lord Herbert was at her feet breathing into her delighted ears the most passionate vows of love and constancy—and Trevelyan was soon forgotten.

We will leave her lover to relate to Theresa all that had passed since they had parted at Trevelyan Castle—how he had counted the hours until the arrival of that anxiously expected answer from his father, which had at last fulfilled his most sanguine hopes; he told her too of his meeting with Trevelyan, and of his open disinterested conduct. "He is a noble fellow after all," continued Lord Herbert, "for he has behaved most generously to me, and therefore I certainly of all men am most bound to feel for him."

And could any one have forborne feeling for him, who had seen him, after thus resigning to another the being he adored, rush,—not to his sister's apartment—but to the solitude of his own, where he no longer endeavoured to check the torrent of grief which burst from his suffering heart. Woe to her who wrings such sorrows from such a heart!—for tears like these seem to claim the pity and retributive justice of Heaven itself.

It was long before Trevelyan composed himself sufficiently to encounter his sister. Their meeting was naturally most painful; and it was some minutes before he had courage to advert to the agitating subject which occupied them both. At last, with a sudden effort to overcome his feelings, "I have made every possible inquiry respecting Lord Herbert," said he speaking very quickly; "St.

Digitized by Google

Ives is warm in his praise; but, knowing well how little the report of one thoughtless young man is to be trusted with regard to the character of another, I employed Mr. Penrhyn, who is, you know, distantly connected with Lord Falkirk's family, to obtain for me the information I desired, and the result of all this is"—Trevelyan's voice faltered—"that Lord Herbert has just accompanied me hither!"

As he uttered these words, Trevelyan hastily rose from his seat, and paced two or three times up and down the room. Then, again returning to his place, he continued, but in a still more perturbed manner, "I trust I have acted right. I believe—I hope—he is honourable, amiable—he has been thoughtless and extravagant, I fear, but his father undertakes to pay all his present debts, that he may set out free, and he on his part undertakes to prove by his future conduct that he is fully sensible of his rare good fortune."

A deep-drawn sigh here again choked Trevelyan's voice, but in a minute he once more proceeded. "At all events, I have acted to the best of my judgment; for, as far as I can learn, there seems to be nothing in his character or conduct which could have justified me, under all circumstances, in refusing my consent, particularly now that she is of age."

"But," interrupted Miss Trevelyan," could you not, as her guardian, as one empowered by her father to decide on the most important event in her life—could you not at least have suggested the reasonableness of delay, that they might both have had time for consideration, and be better able to ascertain their own sentiments, for Theresa is really so very young, and the acquaintance, after all, has been so recent, so slight;—it is, in short, an infatuation rather than an attachment. If you were to promise your consent in a year—or even in six months, provided both continued in the same mind—Surely you might go thus far!"

"No, Louisa, no," said Trevelyan hastily, stopping her, and shuddering as he spoke. "It is impossible; circumstanced as I am, I cannot do it; I must not, dare not, run the risk of being in *that* manner responsible for her

Digitized by Google

future happiness. Were I *but* her guardian I might, I would perhaps, have acted as you suggest; but as it is, honour, indeed some still stronger feeling which I cannot define, every thing in short, forbids my interfering any further than to ascertain that, in relinquishing her to another, I act up to the sacred promise which I made to her father, to the awful responsibility which I took upon myself. How little did I then think I was vowing my own destruction!—sealing my own fate!—Spare me, Louisa," continued Trevelyan, in a broken voice, and clasping his hands as if in mental agony, "spare me, for I am weak, miserably weak, and you must not torture me by suggesting possibilities, doubts, against which I have been arming myself with all the resolution I could summon."

There was a pause: Miss Trevelyan looked in pity, almost in alarm, on the agitated countenance of her brother; for, having by her peculiar fate in life been spared all those feelings which now wrung his soul, she could scarcely even comprehend them. And who will say that she had purchased exemption from such trials too dearly, even by a youth devoid of all its natural charms and illusions, and an after-life of cheerless solitude!

Trevelyan at length became more composed. "Of course, Louisa," said he to his sister, "you will ask Lord Herbert to stay here to-day, and dine with us; he sets off to-night for Scotland, in order to settle with his father all necessary preliminaries to his marriage; and it would be cruel to them both not to allow them to pass this one day together. I also need not, I am sure, ask you to assist me in playing my hard part, for we must not cloud this bright moment in her existence by letting her see all the misery of which she is the cause; and now you had better go to them, and I will join you as soon—as I am able," he added with a convulsive sigh.

As it may be readily supposed, Lord Herbert accepted Miss Trevelyan's invitation, and showed his gratitude by doing every thing in his power to lessen the unpleasant feelings of all concerned; and no one was ever better fitted for carrying off the awkwardness of such a meeting. He talked for all; and there was an ease and liveliness in his conversation which captivated and amused even those

Digitized by Google

most prejudiced against him. He was full of attentions to Miss Trevelyan. He caressed Oscar, admired her work, discussed the books which he saw lying on her table, although unacquainted with them but by their titles, and never having read even thus far until the moment before. With his eyes fixed on Theresa's lovely face, he descanted on the charms of a quiet domestic life, on the swift flight of hours passed in rational occupation, in short, he possessed in so peculiar a manner the talent of being "all things to all men," that gradually Miss Trevelyan herself, although naturally prepossessed against him, was drawn into friendly communication, and grew to wonder less at Theresa's partiality.

Trevelyan did not join them until dinner-time. Theresa was then silent and preoccupied: but although so unlike her usual self, yet her glowing cheeks, the bright glance which she occasionally cast on her lover—the smiles which played round her lips, as her ears greedily listened to each word he uttered—all plainly showed the joy within. Once, and once only, she raised her eyes towards Trevelyan, for the sight of his altered countenance was too painful to be again ventured upon. Till then, he had so well disguised his feelings, had assumed such easy cheerfulness, was so friendly towards his happy rival, that he had deceived even Theresa herself, and she began to think that she had exaggerated his sentiments with regard to her.

But that one single glance told her the real truth. Although he had manfully played that hard part which he had imposed on himself, and to which he had braced his nerves, yet such an effort could not be made with impunity, and ten long years could scarcely have changed him more than the last ten days which had elapsed since their departure from Trevelyan Castle. His cheeks were sunk and hollow; the fire of his eyes seemed gone; his food remained untasted before him, and the wine, in which he at dinner felt himself obliged to pledge Lord Herbert, had alone produced those feverish spirits which for a time deceived her.

As soon as their repast was over, the evening being fine, Lord Herbert obtained leave from Miss Trevelyan

Digitized by Google

that Theresa should accompany him for a short time by the river-side. Any one who has ever been in love, and who has wandered with the object of that love on the banks of the Thames, need not be told of the rapture of that first *tête-à-tête* walk; and it would be cruel to tantalize those who are ignorant of such things by a description of them.

On their return home, Lord Herbert vehemently petitioned for the Neapolitan barcarola. Theresa pleaded the broken strings of her guitar, and the time which it would take to tune it. "Oh, I will mend them! I will tune it! I will do anything, promise anything, if you will only sing it to me; for this evening would not be quite complete without that song;—with it, oh, how perfect!" said he in a lower voice, as he put the instrument into her hands. At its very first sound, Trevelyan left the room, and did not return to it until Lord Herbert was about to depart, which he did soon after ten, having to ride back to town that night.

"I also intend to leave Richmond to-morrow," said Trevelyan to his guest as he took leave of him, "but you know where to write to me, and I shall depend upon your informing me in time when I am to expect to meet you again."—Trevelyan accompanied Lord Herbert down stairs, and did not again return to the drawing-room that evening.

After their departure, Theresa sat immoveable as if in a trance. Miss Trevelyan gazed on her for some time in silence; then, kindly going up to her, with a smile on her face, although tears trembled in her eyes, "Poor dear Theresa!" said she, as she kissed her flushed cheek, "what a bright day this has been to thee! May Heaven in its mercy grant you many such!—if indeed happiness so great be not too much for poor, weak, human nature, to enjoy."

Theresa threw herself into her friend's arms. "Oh, how kind you are to me!" she exclaimed; "so kind, it almost makes me unhappy; I feel so little to deserve such indulgences. But you must now own, Treevy," said she, looking with eager, sparkling eyes into her friend's face—"you must own there never was any one *so* agreeable!"

Digitized by Google

"Yes, I confess it," replied Miss Trevelyan; but she sighed deeply as she spake. "I will allow Lord Herbert's manners and conversation are very agreeable, very —*irresistible*, I suppose."

"Thank you, thank you," dear Treevy," exclaimed Theresa, as she again clasped her arms round her friend's neck. "I was sure you could not help liking him."

"It is with reluctance I allow I cannot," said Miss Trevelyan, shaking her head as she mournfully smiled; "but we will talk no more about him now, for I fear I know too well where such discussions might terminate—at least with me."

Trevelyan had said nothing to Theresa relative to his intended departure from Richmond; he took no leave of her that night, and next morning when she came down to breakfast, he was already gone.

CHAPTER XII.

One struggle more, and I am free
From pangs that rend my heart in twain;
One last, long sigh to love and thee,
Then back to busy life again! BYRON.

THE end of May was fixed upon for the celebration of Theresa's marriage. During the five or six intervening weeks she heard constantly from Lord Herbert, who was still detained in Scotland by business, and his letters breathed nothing but love, hope, and happiness. Miss Trevelyan also frequently heard from her brother, but from whence Theresa never learnt. No reason was ever assigned for his continued absence, and she had not courage to make any inquiries. Indeed, as if by mutual consent, her guardian was scarcely ever named by either of them, nor was the approaching event in Theresa's life oftener alluded to than was unavoidable, for it was a subject which gave rise to so many contending feelings in them both, that neither could wish to discuss it. Besides, Miss Trevelyan had been particularly unwell of

Digitized by Google

late, and Theresa, dreading the renewal of any agitations, was too thankful, when the day had passed in tolerable cheerfulness, to advert to any thing which might disturb its serenity. She plainly saw that her kind friend made every effort to conquer, or at least to conceal, her present depression of spirits. She saw too, that, far from now seeking her society as before, she seemed rather upon principle gradually to wean herself from it, and to resume her former abstracted solitary habits.

All this at times sadly pained Theresa, but a girl of eighteen, desperately in love, thinks more of her lover than of her friend; and, with four hundred miles between her and the object of her passion, no companions could be so agreeable as her own thoughts, indeed of late she had experienced too many painful feelings of self-reproach, when in Miss Trevelyan's society, not to acquiesce readily in this partial suspension of their intercourse.

The 27th of May at length arrived, and brought Theresa a letter from her guardian. He informed her that Lord Herbert was just returned from Scotland, and that on the following day they would both come to Richmond, and bring a lawyer with them, in order to complete the necessary forms and signatures preparatory to her marriage, which it had been previously settled should take place on the 29th.

All seemed now hurrying to a crisis, and Theresa felt in that nervous, and even depressed, state of spirits, which those the most in love perhaps feel the most on the eve of marriage.

Early on the 28th Lord Herbert arrived, and one of his brothers with him; he was laden with kind letters and wedding presents from all his family; his brother expressed the most flattering satisfaction on their approaching near relationship, and poor Theresa, thus the object of universal love and kindness, felt herself at the summit of human felicity. Trevelyan and the lawyer came at the appointed time; the papers were all produced, and the necessary signatures made. Trevelyan appeared to be wholly occupied by the business of the moment, and little passed between him and Theresa but

Digitized by Google

what was absolutely necessary as relative to it. He too, of course, signed the marriage-contract, but his signature was scarcely legible, and, as soon as the whole was finally completed, he hurried to his own room, and there remained the rest of the evening.

Lord Herbert appeared to be, if possible, more in love than ever, still more agreeable, and still more assiduous in his attentions to Miss Trevelyan.

He informed Theresa that one of his sisters, who had returned from Scotland with him, and was now staying with a friend in town, would repair next morning to Richmond to be present at their marriage, and that she had been cruelly disappointed by some unforeseen impediments which had hindered her accompanying him that day to Miss Trevelyan's, in order to make an earlier acquaintance with her new sister.

How intoxicating is that new world of interests, of affections, of exultation, which seems thus to open to a young girl when on the eve of marriage! all around appear but to exist for her, and this world itself seems to assume another character, and to partake of the perfections of Heaven.

At eleven, Lord Herbert and his brother repaired to their hotel in the town. When, on leaving the house, they passed the door of Trevelyan's apartment, he came out to them. "We meet to-morrow morning at the church," said he, in a low tremulous voice. Lord Herbert merely pressed his hand in reply. "I believe there is nothing more to arrange between us," resumed Trevelyan—"so good night," and he shook hands with both the brothers.

"Good night!" repeated Lord Herbert, "and pray go to bed soon, for you look quite worn out."

A strange, ghastly smile crossed Trevelyan's face, which was deadly pale, "to-morrow night I shall have full time to rest, but I have business now, which must be settled; so farewell until to-morrow at eleven."

"Faith! Herbert," said the brother as he and the bridegroom walked home arm-in-arm, "I must confess I almost wonder at the fair Theresa's preference of you to her guardian: do not be affronted with me," said he,

Digitized by Google

laughing, "but I really never saw a man whom I could sooner fancy a woman might fall in love with, and he seems so miserable, and yet behaves so nobly and unselfishly, that I almost hate Miss Howard for giving him up for you; I am sure I should not have done so in her place, and I very much doubt, Herbert, whether you would have acted as honourably in his."

"Perhaps not," said Lord Herbert; "but I am not sure, that if I were a woman I should like my lover the better for being so very *unselfish;* for I suspect there can be no very great affection where there is such *disinterested heroism*, as you call it."

"I do not agree with you," resumed his brother; "Colonel Trevelyan is evidently struggling to overcome feelings too deep and violent to be easily conquered: only look at his countenance; you never saw such expression, so much character, where there was not strong feeling. I pity him from my heart, and again I say you may be proud of being preferred to such a man, and to one of the handsomest fellows, too, I ever saw, though he appears at this moment so much out of health; in short, I heartily wish for his sake that the 29th of May were over, for he is exposed to a most cruel trial."

"For my part I wish it were come," said Lord Herbert, and with those words the brothers parted.

After Lord Herbert's departure, Miss Trevelyan and her young friend sat for some time in silence, for poor Theresa's heart was full: it had an excess of happiness it could scarcely contain, and yet was oppressed by those saddened feelings which naturally visit any woman capable of such a sentiment as real love, on the last evening she spends under the roof that has hitherto sheltered her, though she expects the morrow will unite her to one dearer than all the world besides.

Theresa's whole soul was given to her lover; no mean worldly calculation with regard to those advantages of rank and consequence, which her union with him seemed to promise her, had ever caused one additional throb of exultation to her impassioned heart, which with singleness of devotion was his alone: still, when, after Lord Herbert's departure, the event of the morrow seemed sud-

Digitized by Google

denly to rush on her mind in startling certainty, and when, casting her eyes around, she recollected that in a few hours she must bid farewell, perhaps for ever, to all those objects which seemed by long habit to be identified with her very existence, and which were moreover so intimately connected with the unexampled kindness she had experienced; when all these thoughts suddenly forced themselves upon her, it may be doubted, whether Theresa, like many others thus circumstanced, would not have welcomed a few hours delay as a blessed reprieve!

Feeling that her emotion was at last getting beyond her control, she hastily rose from her seat, and embraced Miss Trevelyan in silence. One long, fervent kiss, one low murmured blessing, were all the expressions of love and regret to which Miss Trevelyan trusted herself to give way when parting that night from her adopted daughter.

Weeping and depressed, Theresa repaired to her own apartment; all there looked comfortless, every thing being packed up for her journey on the morrow; all those objects which belong to daily occupation, and which give to an apartment the look of life, had disappeared; the tables were cleared of their usual litter, and where formerly stood her portfolios and music-books were now piled trunks and imperials; these preparations for the great change in her life about to take place forcibly affected her, and, being in too agitated a state to think of sleep, she dismissed her attendant, and, throwing up the sash of her window, she seated herself by it, welcoming the fresh night-breeze which seemed to quiet her nerves.

It was a lovely night. The fleecy clouds were slowly gliding across the moon; the air was embalmed with that delicious perfume of vegetation belonging to early spring; a profound silence reigned around, only occasionally broken by the clear notes of two nightingales, who were "holding converse sweet" in the adjoining gardens.

Suddenly the sound of voices in the room below, which was that occupied by Miss Trevelyan, attracted Theresa's attention. She could not distinguish the actual words spoken, but, as the window of that lower apartment was also open, she plainly recognised her guardian's voice,

Digitized by Google

and, instinctively, withdrew from her seat. She took up a book and endeavoured to read, but it was impossible; and still the low melancholy sound continued nearly unbroken in the room below, nor did it cease till the hours of twelve, one, and two, had in succession been proclaimed by the clock of the neighbouring church—of that church where she was on the morrow to fix her fate in life for ever. When the last mentioned hour struck, the conversation seemed suddenly to terminate; the door below was then gently opened and reclosed; footsteps were heard slowly descending the stairs, and in a minute all was still.

Theresa awoke next morning agitated and bewildered by her dreams. Again sounded the same bell from that church, whose steeple, outlined against the moonlit sky, having been the last object in her eyes the night before, had, perhaps, in consequence, occasioned such gloomy dreams! At the sound, which she still connected with the horrid visions of her sleep, she started from her pillow and looked fearfully around, almost dreading to see them realized; but the bright rays of the morning sun resting on her wedding-dress, and other preparations for the day's event and journey, alone met her eyes; and those objects, at once overcoming the effect of her visionary troubles, excited too many real emotions to let sleep last any longer. She, therefore, although it was only seven o'clock, rung for her maid, who, having apparently been as wakeful as her mistress, soon appeared, bringing with her a note from Colonel Trevelyan.

In an instant a thousand strange apprehensions, probably still suggested by her late dreams, took possession of Theresa's mind, and it was some time before her trembling hand could untwist the piece of paper which had been given her; but when she at last succeeded, and had cast her eyes over its contents, she almost smiled at her sudden superstitious alarm, for she found merely these words:—"I shall not be at home to breakfast, therefore you may fearlessly join my sister, who I am sure will be much the better for your society, and wishes to see all of you she can. Remember, you must both be ready by eleven. F. T."

Digitized by Google

Restless, incapable of occupation, and anxious to escape from the presence of her attendant, who, like all others of her profession on such occasions, was packing up, and bustling about with most provoking activity and importance, while scarcely able to restrain the already prepared *ladyship*, trembling on her lips,—Theresa left her room in order to repair to the garden, where she hoped to remain unmolested and unseen. As she descended the stairs, little Oscar, who had soon recognised her footsteps, came barking and bounding towards her, expressing by every demonstration in his power his joy at so unexpectedly seeing her. When the feelings are strongly worked upon either by joy or sorrow, the most trivial additional circumstance has then power to affect us. Thus, even the poor dog's caresses came as a reproach to Theresa's heart. "Yes, Oscar," said she, mournfully, "we will have our last walk together; *we* may part friends, at all events!" And they together descended towards the garden.

On reaching the lower passage, she observed that the door of Trevelyan's room was open, and instantly stopped, holding her breath, as she dreaded the possibility of meeting him.—She listened for a minute—but not a sound was to be heard—and she therefore ventured, though cautiously, to advance.—Again she stopped to listen!—All was silent.

Satisfied now that no one was in the apartment, she approached the door, and gently pushing it aside, entered. The bed had evidently never been lain upon; the floor was strewed with pieces of cord and torn paper; and on the table, instead of the books and letters usually scattered about, now stood a solitary writing-case, well secured in a strong leather cover. A vague feeling of anxiety, and even of remorse, shot through her heart at these evident preparations for some final departure, and she hastily cast her eyes round the room, in the hope of seeing some object to contradict her fears; but on the contrary, all confirmed them.

Everything belonging to her guardian had disappeared, and placed near the door was a ready-packed and corded portmanteau,—a travelling-bag—and lying on them a

Digitized by Google

military cloak and sword—a direction-card caught her eye; and removing the cloak, which covered the words, she read this address—"Lieut.-Col. Trevelyan, H. M. S. Undaunted. Spithead."

What could all this mean? Whither was he going? To what was *she* driving him?—for her conscience immediately told her that she herself must be the cause of this concealed, this seeming desperate resolution! And Treevy! her benefactress!—what would become of her, thus at once bereft of all her companions!

These sad ruminations were suddenly checked by the sound of approaching footsteps, and, with a throbbing heart, Theresa darted out of the room, and hurried to the garden.

Had Lord Herbert there beheld his bride, the sight of her self-accusing affliction might possibly have given rise to no agreeable feelings of doubt and jealousy. But such doubts would have been as cruel as unjust. No heart ever beat with a stronger pulse of love than Theresa's did at that moment for her lover; but parting, and under such peculiarly aggravated circumstances, from the only beings who had hitherto shown her kindness, and governed solely by the impelling emotion of the moment, grief was perhaps now uppermost, and her mind was in consequence agitated by all those vague doubts and apprehensions for the future, with which an unsteady character is so constantly perplexed. Theresa remained in the garden until summoned by John to breakfast. Miss Trevelyan was already in the room. Though she looked worn, and her eyes were heavy, she kindly held out her hand to Theresa as she entered, and assuming a smiling countenance—

"Oh, you naughty girl," said she, "for disobeying my orders, and sitting up all night, as I know you did, for I heard you moving about in your room last night long after two o'clock, and although I went in search of you, this morning, as soon as I was up, you were already flown. What have you been doing with yourself all these hours?"

"I could not sleep," said Theresa, "and Oscar and I have been taking our farewell walk together in the gar-

Digitized by Google

den."—Theresa's eyes filled with tears, as she spoke these words.

"Well there is no use in my scolding you now," said Miss Trevelyan, kindly kissing her. "Another will soon take you in hand, one who, in all probability, will spoil you still more than even I have done! So God help thee, my poor Theresa! But now make tea for me, my love—for the last time," she added, looking mournfully in her young friend's face.

"You, Treevy, have had no sleep either, I am sure," said Theresa, who, after having done as her friend desired, gazed on her for some time in silence; "and I fear you are not well."

"I cannot say I am," replied Miss Trevelyan: "but it is nothing; and I dare say I shall sleep to-night; for," added she, in a dejected tone, "all agitation will then be over, and I shall have nothing else to do."

Scarcely a word was spoken by either of them during this melancholy repast, from which both seemed to turn with disgust. As soon as the forms, therefore, of breakfast were gone through, Miss Trevelyan left her seat. "Give me your arm, my love," said she: "it seems fine, so I will take a turn in the garden, and try if the fresh air will revive me a little, as I really fear I do not look at all fit for a wedding."

When there, and with Theresa's hand clasped in hers, she continued to walk for some time in silence. It seemed as if she had some painful secret at her heart which she could not impart, and which weighed it down too heavily for her to be able to speak on any other subject. Theresa's mind was also oppressed with anxiety, longing for, yet not having courage, to demand an explanation of those military preparations which she had seen in her guardian's room. More than once she was on the point of questioning her companion on the subject, in the faint hope of hearing that her apprehensions were unfounded, but each time the words died on her lips, as she feared even to allude to her suppositions. Indeed, she dared not trust herself to pronounce her guardian's name.

Miss Trevelyan at length, with a seeming effort over herself, suddenly addressed Theresa: "I need not, I am

Digitized by Google

sure, ask you to write to me often," said she, "your letters may, in some degree, make up to me for the loss of yourself, as it will be such an interest to me in my lonely existence to follow your brighter path in life."

"Lonely!" repeated Theresa; "will not—your brother ———"

"Oh, you know I cannot expect that Frederick will be always with me," said Miss Trevelyan, hastily interrupting her. "But do not think that I am complaining of being left alone; do not fancy that I feel at this moment any thing but joy at your approaching happiness, although I shall in consequence lose my companion; besides, we soon get *used* to everything, and your letters will be such delightful events in my life, that those days on which I shall receive them will be marked as *fêtes* in my calendar; and after all, how much better off I shall still be than before we were acquainted—before I had a daughter —and there was no one whose happiness I could participate. So we will not take leave, dearest, for we can really scarcely call that a separation which still allows us to share in each other's interests and pleasures."

While Miss Trevelyan thus spoke, she was secretly brushing away with her hand the tears which slowly stole down her face, unwilling to betray their existence to Theresa by the sight of her handkerchief. "But come," she added, looking at her watch, "it is time we should go and dress ourselves, for Frederick told me he should be here between ten and eleven."

Theresa again and again embraced her benefactress. The word "*adieu!*" was not uttered by either of them, for it would have sounded like the acknowledgment of feelings which each was anxious to conceal from the other.

Theresa was scarcely dressed, when Miss Trevelyan entered her room. She had now assumed a cheerful countenance, although it certainly was an expression sadly at variance with the state of her mind. "See," said she, "how smart I have made myself, to do honour to your wedding, Theresa; I am sure you never saw me so fine before; and no one, probably, will ever see me so fine again," added she, with something between a smile

Digitized by Google

and a sigh, "for I do not think there is much chance of my being again called upon to act the part of superannuated bridesmaid. Come, come, no more tears, my love; we must all now be gay and happy; and see, how bright the sun shines upon you; the threatening clouds have all dispersed! Come, let me finish dressing you,"—and the kind-hearted Miss Trevelyan busied herself in arranging Theresa's bridal attire. "Hark! there is the door-bell," said she, as she was gazing in admiration on the lovely bride. "I dare say it is Frederick, who is come to summon us. I suppose I may tell him we are all ready." Theresa drew a long breath, but did not reply; and Miss Trevelyan left her to join her brother.

Some time passed while each moment added to Theresa's nervous agitation; at length she heard a knock at her door, and concluding it was her maid come to complete her arrangements, she called to her to enter.

The door slowly opened, and Trevelyan himself appeared. His cheeks were flushed, his eyes sparkled with a fearful lustre, and, hurrying up to her, he sat down at her side, and took her hand—but at first appeared totally unable to speak.

In a minute, however, making a violent effort to command himself, "Theresa," said he, "you cannot have imputed the manner in which I have of late estranged myself from you to want of kindness on my part, or want of interest in your welfare; I thought this separation was the best thing for us both, as it spared us much additional pain." Theresa pressed his hand in silence, and he continued: "I could not, however, let your wedding-day pass without one word—one keep-sake—which I hope you will value as a memorial of—him who loved you"——

Trevelyan stopped, he felt himself unable to express what he wished, for overpowered by his emotion, his tongue would outstep his intentions. "Here," said he, producing a small jewel-case, "here is my wedding present; you will, I know—wear it for—for your guardian's sake!" He opened the case which contained a bracelet, and with trembling hands clasped it round Theresa's arm. "Beneath that stone is my sister's hair, I knew you

Digitized by Google

would value that; and see the date, that of your marriage, the 29th May, 1800."

"Why did you not give me some memorial of yourself, also?" said Theresa, half reproachfully; "why was not there some black hair mixed with the auburn?"

"No, Theresa, no!" said he, speaking very quickly, "you must have no memorial of one whose existence must in future be separate from yours; you have now another friend, another guardian"——

Trevelyan gasped for breath, but, soon recovering himself, and suddenly casting his eyes on the clock which stood on the chimney-piece, "Come, it is the time," said he, "we must go," and he rose from his seat. Theresa held out her hand to him as if in farewell.—"Farewell! farewell!—best beloved—dearest!" exclaimed Trevelyan, as nearly beside himself he strained her to his heart, and imprinted one long, fervent kiss—his first—his last—on her forehead! Then throwing over her the bridal veil, he hurried her down stairs.

Miss Trevelyan was on the landing-place waiting for them; not a word was spoken—they entered the carriage—it drove on—and in a few minutes they were in the vestry.

All those who were to be present at the ceremony were already arrived; the bridal party consisting of Sir Henry and Lady Williams, and the bridegroom's brother and sister. They proceeded to the altar, and the ceremony immediately commenced.

At that part where the priest demands, "Who gives this woman away?" Trevelyan moved forward—Theresa felt his cold trembling hand take her's, and place it in Lord Herbert's; the mutual vow was made—the nuptial benediction given—Herbert Leslie and Theresa Howard, were pronounced to be man and wife!

When the whole was concluded, there was a momentary pause; Lord Herbert first moved; he led his bride from the altar and the rest followed to the vestry.

On leaving the church Miss Trevelyan looked anxiously round for her brother, and saw him still standing at the spot where the ceremony had taken place, leaning against the railing of the communion-table, with his eyes

Digitized by Google

fixed and his countenance pale as death. Much alarmed she hastened up to him, "Frederick," said she, taking hold of his arm, "are you not well?"

Trevelyan started, "Oh, it is nothing, merely a slight giddiness," said he, passing his hand over his forehead. "But it is over—are they gone?" added he, seemingly endeavouring to rouse himself.

"They are all gone to the vestry," replied Miss Trevelyan, "and you know your signature is once more necessary."

"True, true," said he with quickness, "I had forgot," and he hurried after the rest.

The last forms were gone through, all present signed their names to the marriage-contract, the new married pair drove off, and the rest followed to Miss Trevelyan's house.

When she and her brother arrived there, Theresa had left the drawing-room in order to change her dress for her journey; for Lord and Lady Herbert Leslie were first to spend two or three weeks at the Cumberland lakes, and then to proceed to his father's in Scotland.

As soon as the usual congratulations on such occasions were over, Sir Henry Williams went up to Trevelyan, and drew him towards a window at the furthest end of the room.

"My good friend," said he, "you must take care of yourself; you are not well, I am sure; and I have been thinking that, as you and your sister may feel it dull without your young charge, you cannot do better than come and spend the remainder of this day with us. There will be nobody with us—so do come."

"A thousand thanks for your kindness," said Trevelyan, taking his friend's hand, "but I really cannot."

"To-morrow then," said the kind-hearted Sir Henry; "for I am sure it will be better for you than remaining alone, and you really must now think a little of yourself."

"I have thought of myself," replied Trevelyan mournfully, "and I intend to leave Richmond directly."

"Well, perhaps that is the best thing you can do. Where are you going to—into Cornwall? Hey?"

Trevelyan was silent for a moment, and then proceed-

Digitized by Google

ed,—"I do so hate taking leave, I meant not to have told you of my intentions, but I should make an ungrateful return for the kind interest which you take in me, if I did not now inform you of my future destination. My friend General Hutchinson, is, you know, gone with the expedition to the coast of Spain. He has been most kind to me, and, knowing that I wished to leave England for a time, he has proposed that I should join him as military secretary. Captain Stanley, who is a cousin of mine, has not yet sailed. If I can reach him in time, he has promised to take me out; and I hope to be at Portsmouth this evening."——

Sir Henry looked at Trevelyan for a moment in silence; tears rushed into the old soldier's eyes. "You are a noble fellow, faith," said he, kindly laying his hand on his shoulder; "you deserve better luck; and, indeed, I cannot help in some degree blaming myself for all this, for it was at my house that they first made acquaintance; but, on my honour, I had not then a suspicion of her fancy for him, although I very soon saw——" . . .

"Hush, hush," said Trevelyan, eagerly interrupting him, "do not let us talk of the past; do not, I beseech you, unfit me for the remainder of my task."

Just then Theresa re-entered the room, leaning on Miss Trevelyan's arm, and ready prepared for her journey. Trevelyan started. "One effort more," he murmured to himself, "and it will be over."

Lord Herbert hastened up to his bride, and in a low voice informed her that every thing was ready for their departure. He then took leave of his brother and sister, of the Williamses, and Miss Trevelyan. Trevelyan went up to Theresa, and drew her arm within his.—She once more held out her hand to her dear Treevy; according to their agreement, they did not bid each other adieu. Theresa said not a word to any one else, but, in silence, and without again even raising her head, left the room with her guardian. The hand which pressed Trevelyan's arm trembled violently, and he heard her stifled sobs.—He hurried her down-stairs—one convulsive grasp of her hand as he placed her in the carriage—and all was over.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XIII.

The timid eye I dared not raise,
  The hand that shook when pressed to thine,
Must point the guns upon the chase,
  Must bid the deadly cutlass shine.

To all I love, or hope, or fear,
  Honour, or own, a long adieu;
To all that life has soft or dear
  Farewell—save memory of you.—SCOTT.

WHEN events of such importance were taking place at No. 1, Paragon Row, it cannot be supposed that the inhabitant of the next house would be an uninterested spectator; particularly when that inhabitant was the *Honourable* Mrs. Hopkins, a lady who took so lively an interest in the affairs of all her neighbours. By cross-questioning the clerk the Sunday before, the day and precise hour fixed on for the wedding had been ascertained, and in consequence the whole neighbourhood was, early on the 29th, on the alert; for a marriage was too unusual an event in this elderly female society not to occasion considerable sensation and be duly appreciated. In order "to be ready for whatever might happen," Mrs. Hopkins had that morning breakfasted half-an-hour earlier than usual, that her repast might be "all comfortably over by ten," and that nothing might interfere with the unremitting attention which she intended to pay to the high road and the proceedings next door. A dozen of her most particular friends had been all separately and mysteriously invited to come and partake of the sight; and, as Mrs. Hopkins was too well-bred a person not to relinquish to her visiters the front and best places at her windows, she was at an early hour seen mounted on a chair behind them, having from thence a commanding view of all around.

Any one possessing less patience, faith, and hope, than Mrs. Hopkins, would have been wearied of her watchful employment long before any object had appeared to re-

Digitized by Google

ward these cardinal virtues. For, as the reader knows, it was not until a full hour after she had mounted guard, that Miss Trevelyan's carriage, with a pair of common post-horses, made its appearance; and although, during the intermediate hour, the sound of the bell at the next door had thrice given rise to the welcome report of the arrival of the bridegroom, and had collected all the watchful virgins to their post, the alarm had each time ended in disappointment, as, instead of the expected lover, they had only seen the twopenny post, the milkman, and the butcher's boy.

At length, however, John, with his coat well brushed, his shoes well cleaned, and a large nosegay at his button-hole, issued from the house, giving the last finishing stroke to his hat. He opened the carriage-door, and, with a look of vast importance, put down the blinds and pulled up the windows. But many a long minute again passed unmarked by any circumstance of interest, and again the spirits of Mrs. Hopkins and her company began to flag.

At just five minutes before eleven, however, the white-veiled bride at last appeared on the threshold of the next house. She sprang into the carriage, Colonel Trevelyan and his sister followed—John mounted the barouche-seat—they drove off—and were out of sight in an instant!

"And is that all?" exclaimed the whole party, in unanimous disappointment and indignation. "Well, if ever I saw such a marriage! Not a single bride's-maid! Not a carriage following—was there ever any thing so dull and stupid! What strange beings those Trevelyans are! they never can condescend to do things like other people."

"I wish now that I had taken possession of one of the pews," said Miss Brown, "for one must have seen and heard *something* at least there. But then the service is so long and tiresome."

"And you would have lost their return from church and the breakfast," answered Mrs. Hopkins; "for surely they will have a breakfast of some sort; and I must say," she continued, drawing herself up, "considering all my civilities to them, my having asked them to my little hop,

Digitized by Google

and living next door, and all, they might as well have invited me to join their party; but they are so queer—bless me! what a different story my wedding was, when I married poor dear Mr. Hopkins. I had no less than six bride's-maids all dressed alike, and we had such fun! such joking with them—for Mr. Hopkins laughed and said, he should probably only be married once in his life, and he was determined to make a day of it. And, indeed, I have often thought since how strange and awful those words were, for, poor dear man, he spoke true!"

And here Mrs. Hopkins endeavoured to call up a tear of sensibility, but it was checked ere it reached her eye by the reflection that had his prophetic expectations proved to be false, she must have been gathered to her fathers instead of him—an exchange of situation which she by no means coveted, not being even in any hurry to lay her bones beside Lord Ladbrook's first cousin's in Bow Church-yard.

Thus, in discussions on weddings in general, and invectives on the shabbiness of the one at present under consideration, a full half hour elapsed, when, on a sudden, a young lady who had wisely never left her place at the window, cried out, "Be quick! be quick! here is Miss Trevelyan's chaise coming, the horses full gallop, and I do declare it is the new married pair. See, there is Lord Herbert Leslie!"

"Where! where!" all exclaimed, and there was such a rush for the windows, that many an infirm toe was trodden upon, many a bonnet buffeted from side to side, and many a peevish "I beg your pardon!" and a still crosser, "Oh! it don't signify!" muttered.

"Did you distinguish him?" inquired Mrs. Hopkins of a lady who had never been so fortunate as to see the bridegroom before.

"Oh! yes, I saw him quite well, but I must own I am rather disappointed; for I declare I think Colonel Trevelyan is the handsomest man of the two."

"Bless me, how can you say such a thing!" exclaimed Mrs. Hopkins. "What! with that stiff proud look of his! and I should be glad to know, after all, what business he has to look so proud? he is only an earl's

Digitized by Google

nephew, and Lord Herbert Leslie is a marquis's son! and poor dear Mr. Hopkins, who must have known what real rank was (as he was Lord Ladbrook's first cousin,) used very properly to say, that no one had any business to pride, but those who had a *right honourable* right to it; and that was very cleverly said of him. But see, here comes another carriage; I declare it is the Williamses from Twickenham, and Colonel and Miss Trevelyan with them. Well! how those Williamses do always contrive to squeeze themselves in everywhere! I should like to know what more business they had to be at the wedding than myself, indeed, not half so much; but they always make their way somehow. My Lady Williams knows very well what she is about."

"I can't say my Lord Herbert Leslie does," rejoined one of Mrs. Hopkin's friends, "to bring his bride away from church in Miss Trevelyan's shabby old chaise, which has not, I am sure, been even new painted since the year one. How very strange! I never heard of a wedding without a new chaise and four, and favours."

"I suspect," said Mrs. Hopkins mysteriously, and with great resumed importance; "the truth is, they want to make as little fuss as possible, being all pretty well ashamed of the business; as well they may, for I must say it has been most scandalously huddled up. Why, the acquaintance only began at the Star ball in the winter, as I myself know—and such an attack as was made upon Lord Herbert that night! I never saw any thing like it; they actually manœuvred so well, that he danced with no one but their precious Miss. Of course, they were in a hurry to get her off their hands, as it is not every one who would marry a person of her description; and, though Lord Herbert has not a sixpence in the world, and is, I am told, a gambler into the bargain, yet he was too good a catch for such a one as Miss Howard, to let him slip through their fingers. I know more of all this than they are aware of, although they have never condescended to make my acquaintance."

The rattling sound of a carriage at full speed here interrupted Mrs. Hopkins, and at last the real right bridal chaise and four, with trunks, imperials, and postilions in

Digitized by Google

scarlet jackets, and white hats, drove up to Miss Trevelyan's door.

"Well, this is something like," said she in a more complacent tone, for by this time the five carriages and the crowd collected before the house, gave a look of importance to the business, and all eyes were fixed with intense interest on the vehicle destined to carry off the principal actors in the scene.

The lady's-maid and the gentleman's gentleman were soon seen bustling backwards and forwards with various boxes, baskets, and parcels; at last the cap-case, which had been detained for the wedding paraphernalia, appeared, and was fixed in front. All was now ready, a shaking of hands took place between Theresa's maid, the fat cook, and deaf John. The abigail was then most gallantly hoisted up into the barouche-seat by the genteel valet, while John secured her petticoats round her ankles with old-fashioned propriety. A few minutes more elapsed, when a sort of bustle took place at the door of the house, and Lady Herbert Leslie, leaning on Colonel Trevelyan's arm, appeared. She sprang into the carriage—the bridegroom followed—the door was closed—the valet took his place by the abigail—"All right!" was heard—and the postilions, that is to say, Cupid on the leaders, and Hymen directing the wheelers, putting spurs to their horses, they were all out of sight in a minute.

"Could you distinguish her face?" exclaimed one of Mrs. Hopkins's guests.

"No," replied Miss Brown; "but I saw her veil, a beautiful Chantilly blonde veil, and she had on a nice diamond hoop-ring."

"Diamond hoop-ring!" exclaimed Mrs. Hopkins; "how in the world could you see that?"

"Why, did you not observe that she took out her handkerchief when she got into the carriage, and her glove was off, so I saw quite plain, on her third finger, a very handsome diamond ring."

"I wonder where she got it," said Mrs. Hopkins significantly, in evident displeasure at another person having discovered what had escaped herself. "But who is this

Digitized by Google

lady and gentleman getting into the next carriage, a very genteel-looking young man, and a very fashionable equipage? and see, what a lovely white hat and feathers she has on! who, in the name of goodness can they be! I I will make Betty find out; but those tiresome servants of Miss Trevelyan's are quite impracticable; the man pretends to be deaf, but none are so deaf as those that won't hear, say I; however, I am determined I will discover whom the Trevelyan's have picked up to give an air to their wedding, for I must say these can't be nobodies. There now, the Williamses are taking their departure, but they have no favours to make a show with, which I dare say they counted upon."

"Oh, none of the party have favours," said Miss Brown; "I am sure I never saw such a scrubby wedding in my life, and I declare I think it is hardly worth while to be married at all, if it is to be after such a fashion! but I know now-a-days it is reckoned vastly genteel for marriages to take place in corners, and to be as dull and stupid as possible. Well, now, I suppose it is all over—Oh no, here is another carriage driving up, a hack chaise! but whom in the world can that be for? I only counted six persons at the ceremony, besides the bride and bridegroom, so what can this hack chaise mean?"

"Oh, it is for some of the Leslie servants, of course," said Mrs. Hopkins; "there, they are putting more luggage into it you see."

Old John was slowly depositing in the carriage a portmanteau, a writing-case, a military cloak and sword. "Dear preserve me, a sword! whom can that belong to? how very strange! Betty, Betty!" cried Mrs. Hopkins over the staircase, "do, bless you, just step outside and try and find out whom that hack chaise is for, and where it is going to; there now, be quick, and come back directly and let me know."

But before Betty's return, old John had completed the packing of the chaise, and, having desired the post-boy to turn his horses' heads towards Kingston, he stood by the steps of the carriage holding the handle of the door with one hand, and every now and then rubbing his eyes with the other: presently Colonel Trevelyan, with his

Digitized by Google

hat drawn close over his face, issued from the house. He was hurrying into the chaise, when, on seeing John, he stopped and held out his hand to him. The faithful old servant seized it with both his, "Bless your honour! God preserve your honour, and send you back safe! I am sure I never expected this was to happen again—— and my poor mistress!" . . . . . .

Here John was obliged to have recourse to his pocket-handkerchief, and Trevelyan, taking advantage of his loosened hand, sprang into the chaise. As the back of the carriage was turned towards Mrs. Hopkins's house, no more was seen of him, the door was instantly closed, and it drove off at full speed.

Old John kept his eyes fixed upon the chaise as long as it was visible, and remained still for some time fixed to the spot, as if listening for the last sound of its receding wheels. He then again drew out his handkerchief and wiped his eyes, and deliberately shut and locked the gate of the little court adjoining the high road; in a minute or two he slowly entered the house, the door of which he also closed after him, and such was the breathless attention which had been paid to the whole transaction, that even the key was heard to turn, and the bolt inside to be fastened.

Thus, where a few minutes before there had been such an unusual crowd and bustle, all was now silent and deserted.

And many a day passed before that silence was broken, or that door unbarred. Mrs. Hopkins's ears were no longer discomposed by the sound of music or voices in cheerful communication at her next-door neighbour's; the garden was totally deserted except by poor little Oscar, who sometimes wandered about it alone, in search of his former companions, or endeavoured by his bark to entice his solitary mistress to join him. No wherry was now seen waiting below the garden-gate; nor did the sound of carriages at the door any longer attract Mrs. Hopkins's attention, or excite her envy and astonishment.

The unusual agitation and exertions of the last two months had greatly affected Miss Trevelyan's already declining health, and, for several weeks after Theresa's

Digitized by Google

marriage, she was unable to leave her room. She had called up smiles to cheer the last hours which her young charge spent under her roof, and with a smile also she took leave of her brother; but, when the door had finally closed upon him, and she felt herself again a solitary being, with no one for whom to make any exertion, she then sunk entirely; for her mind, wounded and depressed, had no longer power to struggle against the infirmities of her body, and each added to the sickness of the other. When, on the night previous to her separation from Theresa, her brother had first informed her of his intended departure on the morrow, self for the moment got the better, and, almost unconsciously, she gave way to expressions of reproach and discontent, on feeling herself to be thus at once deserted by all those from whom she had most right to expect kindness.

But such feelings could not long exist with one of so meek a spirit, and, soon convinced that the active life which her brother sought was the only remedy for his present sickness of mind, she tutored herself into content. Perhaps some may blame Colonel Trevelyan for his conduct in this respect, and deem it inconsiderate towards his sister; but let no one presume to pass sentence upon him, unless they have themselves felt and been able to resist the absorbing power of severe suffering; for misery as well as happiness has the pernicious effect of converting *self* into an all-engrossing object, and, in consequence, Theresa, in her delirium of happiness, and Trevelyan, in his depth of despair, were both equally betrayed into a degree of forgetfulness of their friend and benefactress, which, under any other circumstances, they would not even have imagined to be possible.

While now confined for weeks to her apartment, Miss Trevelyan was again obliged to look her cheerless, desolate existence in the face.—Its solitude appalled her, and she had once more nearly sunk into that state of morbid melancholy from which the social enjoyments of the last two years had so happily roused her. But under this trial she applied for strength where she had never applied in vain, and her invigorated mind, struggling with its infirmity, at last obtained the mastery. She meekly sub-

Digitized by Google

mitted to the pain of having again thrown back upon her own heart those treasures of tenderness with which it was gifted, which she had so freely lavished on her young friend, and to which, as to all persons of her affectionate nature, some object of daily interest was necessary.

But she did not allow these now unoccupied feelings, by preying on themselves, to embitter an existence which they were intended to sweeten. She turned towards her suffering fellow-creatures, and in "labours of love" found that employment for her affections which was denied her in the nearer and more endearing connexions of life; and many a systematic charity, many an active plan for the comfort of her destitute neighbours, were dated from that period when she was in so great a measure deprived of her own. In the pious discharge of all these Christian duties we will now leave Miss Trevelyan, and follow her brother on his melancholy journey on the evening of Theresa's wedding-day.

Trevelyan reached Portsmouth about six. On driving up to the George Inn, he saw a number of sailors collected round the door, and by the crest on their hats he recognised them to belong to the Undaunted. The cockswain soon made his way up to the chaise-window, and inquiring whether "his Honour was one Colonel Trevelyan," put into his hand a note from Captain Stanley. This was to desire him to hasten on board the moment he arrived, for, as the wind was fair, he wished to sail that evening, and had indeed already given orders to unmoor. This hurry was just what best suited Trevelyan's present state of feeling, for he had looked forward with horror to his long solitary evening at the inn. He therefore hastily leaped from the chaise—the sailors seized upon his luggage, and, conducted by the cockswain, they all hurried down to the sallyport, where the Captain's barge, with the remainder of its crew, was ready to receive him.

It was a blowing, lowering evening; the clouds were scudding fast before the wind—the white swelling waves dashed on the shore—and the boats danced backwards and forwards alongside of the wharf. Trevelyan, who had served his apprenticeship at sea, in his various mili-

Digitized by Google

tary voyages, and who (particularly at that moment) cared little for the boisterous state of the elements, quickly followed the jolly tars into their rocking bark. The twelve men all seized their oars, and, holding them upright in the air, according to the custom of the boat's crew of ships of war, waited for the signal from the cockswain, who had taken his station at the helm. The word was given, and the oars fell with one loud splash into the waves.

Those who have been forced by adverse circumstances to quit their native shore, and to leave behind them all that their souls hold dear, will know full well the shock which that *splash*, on finally leaving land, gives to the heart. It seems as if the fatal stroke severed us from all we love, as if it made us even outcasts from the habitable world.

Such were the painful feelings which that sound produced, as it vibrated on Trevelyan's ear. The last feeble link which still connected him with Theresa appeared now broken; and, while he watched, with contracted brow, the objects on shore lessening at every stroke of the oars, and strained his eyes as if to take the last look of her beloved features, "Farewell, Theresa!" he murmured to himself; "Farewell for ever!"

The boat danced on the waves, the salt spray dashing over its sides, and hanging in large drops on the wild flowing ringlets of the sailors. They soon reached the side of the Undaunted. The shrill whistle of the boatswain was heard, and in an instant Trevelyan was on the deck. The topsails were already at the mast-head—the last heave of the capstan was heard—the anchor was stowed—the boat hoisted in—all connexion with the shore was thus at an end—and in a minute the Undaunted was under sail!

Captain Stanley was so much occupied in giving the necessary orders, that he had only time to welcome his cousin with a hearty shake of his hand, bidding him consider his cabin as his own, and directly left him to return to his duty. The desertion, however, in which Trevelyan now found himself, all round being busy at their posts, suited particularly well to the present state of his

Digitized by Google

mind, as he felt totally unequal to any further mental exertion. He took his station by one of the guns, welcoming the freshening breeze and salt spray which cooled his throbbing head, and there remained gazing on the receding shore, until darkness blended every object into one undistinguishable mass. He then paced the deck till past midnight, when heavy rain, which came on in squalls, drove him at last into the cabin for shelter. By break of day, he was again looking eagerly from the stern of the ship for the shores of England; but they had now entirely disappeared, and, he saw nothing around him but one unvaried expanse of dark sea and sky.

The events of the last few hours had been so hurried, that the dead pause which now succeeded helped by contrast to confuse Trevelyan's mind, and he felt bewildered as one awaking from an appalling dream.—But a few hours before he was at Theresa's side!—he could still gaze on her face—he heard her voice—he had pressed her to his heart! And now!—*she* was the bride of another; and he—alone and uncared for—an exile from his native land!

Digitized by Google

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

All lost—that softness died not—but it slept,
And o'er its slumbers rose the strength, which said,
"With nothing left to love—there's nought to dread"—
'Tis more than Nature's—like the burning might
Delirium gathers from the fevered height. BYRON.

NEARLY two years had elapsed since that eventful day on which the nuptials of Lord and Lady Herbert Leslie were celebrated, when, one afternoon, in May 1802, as Mrs. Hopkins was returning home from her usual walk, she saw a hack chaise drive up to her next door neighbour, Miss Trevelyan's. As the step of the carriage had been just let down when she reached the spot, an impulse of civility, but one still stronger of curiosity, made her stop to let the traveller alight—and she saw a tall, thin man, in deep mourning, with the empty sleeve of his left arm fixed across his breast, leave the carriage. His face was turned away while giving some orders to his servant, and he then entered the house so quickly, that Mrs. Hopkins could not distinguish who he was; waiting, therefore, a minute till the friendly recognitions between the domestics were over, she stepped up to the newly-arrived servant, and in as careless a tone as she could assume, inquired what visiter had just gone in to Miss Trevelyan.

"General Trevelyan," replied the man, who was also in mourning.

"Do you mean Colonel Frederick Trevelyan?" said Mrs. Hopkins. "Bless me, how he is changed! and he has lost his arm?"

"Yes, ma'am, it was shot off at the battle of Alexan-

Digitized by Google

dria, and he has never yet well recovered from the wound."

"And who is he in such deep mourning for?" anxiously inquired Mrs. Hopkins, who had by this time laid aside all pretence to indifference in her queries, thinking she might as well get all the information she could out of the agreeable communicative servant, before reserved, dry old John returned.

"My master is in mourning for Lord St. Ives, Lord Launceston's only son, his first cousin as was."

"Good gracious! yes," exclaimed Mrs. Hopkins, "I now recollect having seen his death in the papers a short time ago, and I declare Colonel Trevelyan is actually next heir to Lord Launceston."

"So people says," rejoined the servant, and he seemed willing to give farther particulars, but just then, John (to whom Mrs. Hopkins had a remarkable antipathy) returning, she thought it most prudent to close her inquiries, and walk on. Instead, however, of going home according to her original intention, she, big with this piece of intelligence, immediately went the round of all her particular friends, that she might be the first to announce (with a look of vast importance and superior information) that General Trevelyan, next heir to the earldom of Launceston, was returned to settle at Richmond.

This conversation between Mrs. Hopkins and the servant, at the door of Miss Trevelyan's house, will in some measure acquaint the reader with the events which had taken place during the last two years.

Trevelyan, on leaving England in the Undaunted, on the evening of Theresa's wedding-day, proceeded to Minorca, where he joined his friend General Hutchinson. During all that autumn and the following winter, when the fleet, under Lord Keith, remained cruising in the Mediterranean, Trevelyan's depressed state of mind and altered spirits were visible to all; he made every exertion in his power, from a wish to keep the secret of his soul sacred within his own breast, but he keenly felt the want of personal active employment, and began to think that the monotony of sea life, although in search of the enemy, was more trying than even home would have been.

Digitized by Google

"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick;" and to one whose *only* hope of relief rested on military excitement, that additional sickness was hard to bear.

At length, on the 22nd of February, the fleet received orders to leave Marmorice Bay; and on the 1st of March it anchored in that of Aboukir. The intention of the Commander-in-chief, Abercromby, was directly to attempt a landing on the shores of Alexandria, but, from the boisterous state of the wind and sea, it was impossible to effect the disembarkation of the troops until the 8th. During the intervening week, the mere prospect of employment and of danger seemed to rouse Trevelyan, restoring him once again to his former animated self. The sight of the formidable enemy, the interminable batteries on the heights, and the long line of cannon on the sea-shore—all these preparations for attack and defence, which might have made the stoutest heart to quake, only served to brace Trevelyan's nerves, raising his spirits to a pitch of wild enterprise.

Every one is acquainted with the memorable events which took place on the 8th, 13th, and 21st of March. On the first of these three days, Trevelyan, with his brave countrymen, landed in open boats on the far-famed shore of Egypt beneath the murderous fire of the enemy. For the first time since that day on which he had left England, he felt his blood bound in his veins; for the first time his countenance assumed its wonted fire and spirit: he smiled as the enemy's shot whizzed past him, and with animated cheers he encouraged the men. But, as he saw his younger and happier companions fall around, and felt himself as if defended by an impenetrable spell of misfortune, again a pang of suffering contracted his dark brow, and, in a tone of reckless impatient eagerness, he called out still louder, to the men fearlessly to advance through the splashing waves and the fire of the cannon levelled at them.

Stanley, his friend, cousin, and kind host, during the last six months, fell mortally wounded at his side, and died in his arms. Trevelyan saw his grave dug on the shores of Alexandria, and paid the last duties to the only being, who, knowing his real situation could sympathise

Digitized by Google

with it. Again, in the engagement on the 13th, Trevelyan heedlessly courted every danger, and again he he passed through them all unscathed. Death had by this time opened the way for quick promotion, and at the battle of Alexandria, Trevelyan, now Brigadier-General, led on his brigade.

The tragical event of that day is well known to all—for it was on that day that the brave veteran Abercromby fell; well earning those marks of a country's gratitude which he did not survive to enjoy. General Hutchinson succeeded in the command, and Trevelyan had just received from him an order to advance with his detachment to the charge, when a cannon-ball shattered his left arm; the instant he felt the shock, he hoped at last *that* the death-blow which he had so long courted had finally reached him. An officer near, who had seen the direction of the ball, observing him stagger, hurried up to him. "You are wounded, I fear," said he—"Yes," replied Trevelyan, in a firm voice, "I think mortally." And as the life-blood flowed quickly from his veins, and the objects around him began to disappear from his glazing eyes, hoping his hour of release was come, a smile played over his altering features, and muttering to himself, "Thank God!" he sank on the ground.

His mutilated arm was bound up with his sash; he was immediately carried off the field, and conveyed as soon as possible on board the Undaunted. It was not till laid on a couch, in his poor friend Stanley's cabin, that animation returned. In the first struggles which nature made for breath, the name of Theresa escaped from his whitened lips—but, when restored to full consciousness, an expression of keen anguish and disappointment crossed his face, and he raised his languid eyes to heaven, as if in reproach.

Trevelyan's arm was so much injured that immediate amputation was deemed necessary, and preparations for the operation were made without delay. He said not a word, did not change countenance, but looked upon his appoaching sufferings with a sort of apathy and hardened courage, almost beyond nature. When his clothes were

Digitized by Google

about to be removed, a black ribbon, which hung round his neck, caught on one of the buttons of his waistcoat; his servant was preparing to disentangle it, when Trevelyan observing the accident, eagerly seized it, and with his right arm hastily passing it over his head, he held the bloody ribbon, (to which a small locket was attached,) fast clenched in his hand during the whole of the painful operation.

It is needless to dwell on the days of restless suffering, and the sleepless nights of fever, which succeeded. During the many lonely hours which now passed heavily over him, Trevelyan communed with his own heart, and found no lack of occupation for his awakened mind. He had ever been what is in the world called an excellent man, having received in his childhood that precious instruction, those holy precepts, which often influence the conduct and stamp the character, preserving it from the snares of life, even when the sacred source from which such better feelings proceed is forgotten and disregarded. Thus trained, Trevelyan, by nature honourable and kind-hearted, had passed through the most dangerous years of buoyant youth, free from its grosser vices, respected and beloved! But he had ever trusted to those his natural good qualities rather than to religious principle; and, having for many years encountered no peculiar trial, he had not till lately felt the want of an upholding power greater than his own. Often when now lying on his couch on the deck of the Undaunted, and refreshed by the first breath of an Italian spring, his mind wandered to England and to his home. The mild countenance of his sister would then come to his recollection, her patient endurance, her practical piety; and with her gentle image also came the remembrance of those often-repeated precepts and admonitions, to which in his boyhood he had so carelessly listened. And they now came back upon him with a power which they had never before possessed, opening to his mind a new world of inquiry and reflection.

In this mental conflict he had recourse to the Book of Life, and in that holy volume found a relief to his sorrows, which he had in vain sought for, even in the cannon's mouth. The reduced state of his body also assisted

Digitized by Google

in subduing the fever of his mind, and, his awakened conscience now upbraiding him for the recklessness with which, wholly possessed by passion, he had thoughtlessly, almost impiously, courted death, "*when thus unhouseled, unanointed, unannealed,*" he in deep self-abhorrence and contrition became an humbled Christian! Theresa was not forgotten—she could not be—for she was entwined with every feeling of his soul, formed a part of his very self.

> And oft in the nightly silence of his tent
> His fixed mind did gaze upon her still;
> But she would pass before his fancy's eye
> Like some delightful vision of the soul
> To soothe, not trouble it.

The remembrance of her was no longer the fierce agony it once had been, and, if life now wore to him a totally different aspect from that which it had hitherto presented, when buoyant with youth and hope—he blessed God for the change. He remained on board the Undaunted for several weeks; at length, when sufficiently recovered, he was landed at Malta, and, soon as his health permitted, he resumed his military duties as Brigadier-General, with the detachment of the army then at that depot. Early the following spring, news arrived of the ratification of the treaty of peace at Amiens, and nearly at the same time Trevelyan also received letters from England, informing him of the death of Lord St. Ives. The formal announcement of this melancholy event was accompanied by a letter from his cousin Lady Augusta, intreating him, if possible, to return speedily to England and join them at Trevelyan Castle, her father having, in consequence of this severe blow, sunk into a state of alarming weakness and depression, from which, she was convinced, nothing was so likely to rouse him as his presence. All this determined Trevelyan's future plans; the war being now over, he easily obtained leave of absence, and, as we already know, arrived in England about the end of May; returning home an altered, but a resigned, if not a happy man.

The first meeting between the brother and sister was,

Digitized by Google

from various causes, painful and agitating. It was long before Miss Trevelyan could look at her brother's mutilated figure and altered appearance with composure. She, too, was changed; for two years at her time of life, and two years of declining health, mark strongly those lines of advancing age, which it is always so painful to trace in a face we love; but, except these changes in Miss Trevelyan herself, every thing else around her was to her brother painfully the same, recalling but too well the former happy days which he had spent under her roof: and so strongly did every object which now met his eyes bring back Theresa to his mind, that her marriage and their final separation seemed to him events but of the day before; and feelings which he had flattered himself had long since been subdued, again rushed on his soul with overwhelming force. But he met them bravely, and the next morning he welcomed his sister at breakfast with a cheerful countenance.

They were hardly seated before John came in with a card in his hand, and laying it down before Trevelyan, "Mrs. Hopkins's compliments," said he, "and she begs to know how General Trevelyan finds himself after his journey."

"Mrs. Hopkins is still the same," said he, laughing, "and she is early in the field; I really believe she has some matrimonial plans upon me. My grateful compliments, John," he continued gaily, "and tell her, I shall take the earliest opportunity of throwing myself at her feet."

John, who never took a joke, departed, muttering over his lesson to himself, and so absorbed, that not heeding where he went, he caught his foot against Trevelyan's chair, and stumbling against the pianoforte, made all its strings ring. Trevelyan started; his countenance instantly changed—and he knit his brow with an expression of pain.

"No harm done!" called out John; "it is only Miss's catarrh, as she used to call it, that I have hit against; but it was all broke to pieces before," added he surlily, "so it don't much signify."

Trevelyan made no comment, and a pause of some

Digitized by Google

minutes ensued after John, rubbing his bruised hand, had left the room.

"Where is *she?* Where are the Leslies?" Trevelyan at length said in a low voice.

"They are gone abroad," replied Miss Trevelyan, "and are now, I believe, at Paris. They left England about a month ago."

"So lately!" said Trevelyan with eagerness—"Did you see her?"

"Yes; Theresa wrote to me the instant she arrived from Scotland, and herself proposed coming to me."

"And you saw her?" again inquired Trevelyan, unconscious that it was a second time he had put the question.

"Of course I saw her, for she spent a whole day with me. She came alone; for she said that Lord Herbert was gone to procure their passports, and that he was too busy making preparations for their departure to be able to accompany her; indeed, I do not believe they were above forty-eight hours in London altogether. I preached to her as in days of yore," continued Miss Trevelyan, smiling, "and warned her of the dangers to which her inexperience and her rare beauty would expose her; for in truth, if any thing, she is really more lovely than ever. Of course she smiled at my fears, and, as usual, stopped my lectures by her caresses."

Trevelyan sighed. "She appeared happy, did she not?" he inquired, with his eyes still fixed on the ground.

"Yes, indeed I think so; but you know I could hardly judge, she was so short a time with me. She spoke much of Lord Falkirk's kindness to her, and of the hospitality of Scotland. I could have fancied there was a shade of difference in her manner; that it had less of its former wild gaiety; but that change is most natural, and I must say greatly improves her. She inquired much after you; indeed it seemed to me as if all your goodness to her had come back upon her mind with double force since her separation from us, for she over and over recurred to all her obligations and to all her former happiness."

Trevelyan again sighed, but made no comment, and, soon after, leaving the breakfast-table, he walked towards

Digitized by Google

the window, and continued for some time gazing in silence on the view from it, lost in thought. At length, rousing himself—"How much the trees in your garden are grown, Louisa," said he; "they want sadly a little of my pruning-knife, for the river is quite hid, and I really think I must see whether I cannot clear them away a little, even with my one arm.—Oh! there is Mrs. Hopkins as usual keeping watch at her verandah,"—added he, smiling, and drawing away from the window; "poor woman! I wish she could find better occupation than watching her neighbours so assiduously, for I verily believe she has not left her post, since I left England."

John and the breakfast things had by this time disappeared, and, Miss Trevelyan soon after leaving the room; her brother remained alone. He went slowly up towards the pianoforte. On it still lay Theresa's guitar, but, as John said, all broken, for there was not a string remaining in its place. The ribbon attached to it, and which used to hang over her shoulders, was faded and soiled. Beneath the instrument lay a torn, half rubbed-out piece of music; and on examining it, Trevelyan recognized the Neapolitan Barcarola, which Theresa used so often to sing in their expeditions on the water; her name, with July 20th, 1800, was written on it, in several places. This date, thus often repeated, caught his attention, and, recalling to mind the events of that bright year of his life, he calculated that it must have been on that very day that Lord Herbert Leslie had first heard her sing it, and that, in the indulgence of her girlish sentiment, and fancied safety from detection, Theresa had thus fondly recorded *that* evening, which, although then unknown to herself, was destined to influence her whole future existence.

Folding up the song, Trevelyan put it into his pocket, and then slowly descended into the garden. The neglected shrubs and trees had grown so luxuriantly that he could hardly make his way along the gravel walk which led to the river-side; but when there, standing at the low parapet-wall, every object he saw had remained but too exactly the same. *There* was the same lovely Thames rippling at his feet; and the same measured

Digitized by Google

sound of dipping oars, with which his ears had been, two years before, so familiar, and which was connected in his mind with so much of enjoyment, again greeted him!—Close beneath the garden-wall a boat, apparently waiting for its fare, was fastened to the shore, and by the name written at its stern he recognized the very same wherry in which, day after day, he had formerly rowed Theresa and his sister. The owner of the boat, who was standing near, immediately recognized Trevelyan, and respectfully taking off his hat—"Glad to see your honour safe home again," said the man, "although not looking altogether so well as one could wish, certainly; and I fear," added he, glancing at his empty sleeve, "your honour will not now be able to row the ladies about as you used to do, at least not without my help."

"No, indeed," replied Trevelyan, "I am afraid I shall never row the ladies any more," and a deep drawn sigh involuntarily escaped him; "but how have you fared, Platt, since we parted?"

"Why, but middling, Sir. It is hard times with us poor watermen;—few fares going; but now that peace is made, I hope the gentlefolks will take more to the river than they have done lately, and, whenever your honour and the ladies should have a mind for a row, I hope you will remember John Platt."

"I fear, Platt," replied Trevelyan, "I have had too much of the water during the war, to take to it in peace; but here is something for old acquaintance sake," and, putting into the man's hand a larger sum than he had seen for many a day, Trevelyan left him, and, proceeding along the towing-path towards the meadows, wandered along amid his old haunts. What thoughts and recollections they forced upon him need hardly be told, and the additional sadness in his looks and manner, on his return home, but too plainly betrayed the direction which those thoughts had taken.

"I have been to Twickenham in search of the Williamses," said he, as, in seeming fatigue both of body and mind, he sank into a chair on again reaching his sister's room; "but the house is shut up, and the woman who

Digitized by Google

came to the door seemed quite ignorant about them. Do you know whither they are gone?"

"They left Twickenham full a year ago," replied Miss Trevelyan. Lady Williams thought that the place was damp, and did not agree with her, and they are now settled in Hertfordshire."

"Then I fear you live still more alone than ever," said her brother; "as they were, I think, your only friends."

"Why in truth I do—but how can I help it? No one can wish for the society of such a sick old woman as I am grown; for I now can be no object to any one, not even to your friend Mrs. Hopkins. But I assure you, I am not near so sulky a being as I once was, and should be even thankful if I had a few kind friends to cheer my solitude, but such friends as I require are perhaps not so easily found, and I acknowledge, besides, that I have still a foolish, perhaps even a blameable, dislike to encountering strangers; however, I have a large acquaintance in another line, and lack neither occupation nor sympathy among them, and now that you are returned, I shall be quite gay again. I hope, by the by, Frederick, you remembered to call on Mrs. Hopkins."

"O yes," said he, "I have just left my card; she was luckily out, and so I have done her business handsomely."

But Trevelyan was not to be let off so easily, and before the end of that evening John, grinning from ear to ear, laid before him a card three times the size of that which he had presented to him in the morning.

"Mrs. Hopkins's compliments, and requests the honour of General Trevelyan's company at dinner on Tuesday next, the 20th of May."

Trevelyan burst out laughing. "Well, really this is a downright assault," said he. What in the world can the good lady want of me?"

"And what will you do Frederick?" said his sister. "Will you go?"

"No, no, I can't do that, I will not encourage such forwardness," added he again laughing. "Why I should have all the old ladies of Richmond and its vicinity after

Digitized by Google

me, if I did; but as I must soon fix my day for going to my uncle in Cornwall, I had better at once name the 20th, and as I may be very sure my departure will be known by Mrs. Hopkins even to the minute when I get into the carriage, I shall thus get off without giving any affront."

Accordingly he wrote his regrets at not being able to wait upon Mrs. Hopkins, business obliging him to leave Richmond.

This was a cruel disappointment to the widow of Lord Ladbrook's first cousin, who had now fancied herself sure of her prey. She once thought of altering her day, but there was no time for giving notice to the rest of her company. She might by that means lose Lady Araminta Hodges; and, besides, the cook declared that before the 20th the stoutest tooth would not be able to make its way through the haunch of venison which had given birth to the party, there was therefore no resource. The cruel chaise which was to deprive her of her much wished-for guest was seen to carry him off early on the Tuesday morning, and all she could do was, to let his note of excuse lie carelessly open on her table for the perusal of her company, and to tell them, in an easy sort of way, how sadly vexed poor dear General Trevelyan was at being prevented dining with her, by receiving an unexpected summons from his uncle in Cornwall; for of course Mrs. Hopkins had ascertained by means of Trevelyan's pleasant communicative servant whither he was going. "A very gentlemanly man is General Trevelyan," she continued to those of her guests who had never dared to aspire so high as the next heir to an earldom in their attempts at society. "I am sure you would have liked him of all things, and we would have made him tell all his stories about his battles, and his landing on the Pyramids of Egypt, (which they say is the finest thing an army ever did,) and attacking and taking Cleopatra's needle so bravely; and in short, we should have heard all about those curious things which he has seen and done, so I am really particularly sorry he was prevented joining our party; but naturally enough he felt he could not refuse his uncle Lord Launceston, who is, I am told,

Digitized by Google

fast going," added she, looking very significant; "and of course in his present situation, General Trevelyan must have a great deal on his hands. Poor dear Mr. Hopkins used to say, no one had any idea of the overwhelming business of people of rank, and of course, with his near connexion with the peerage, he knew all about those things; and indeed I myself," continued Mrs. Hopkins with an assumed look of suppressed importance, "may be pretty well informed on those matters also, having married into two titled families."

While Mrs. Hopkins was thus entertaining her friends, Trevelyan was journeying on towards Cornwall, and with no great anticipations of pleasure from his visit. The probable approaching change in his own worldly situation, in consequence of the premature death of his poor cousin, far from gratifying his mind by the near prospect of riches and distinction, only depressed it the more by strongly reminding him that he had no one now with whom to share those advantages; and such reflections naturally ended,—as indeed his every feeling was but too prone to end—in the remembrance of Theresa, of that Theresa who had once been connected in his mind with the brightest visions of domestic happiness, and who was now separated from him for ever!

Late in the afternoon of the second day our traveller reached Trevelyan castle. As he drove up to the door, and saw the numberless servants in deep mourning collected on the steps to receive him, the recollection of the exalting crowd, which at his former visit he had seen gathered together on that very spot, in the celebration of the coming of age of the young heir, rushed on his mind and powerfully affected him. How few would have given him credit for the feeling of deep regret and melancholy which then oppressed his spirits, and rendered the meeting with Lord Launceston, and his now only surviving child, most painful and agitating. The present quiet of the house also, contrasting so strongly with what he remembered of it formerly, when he had seen the young and the gay enjoying life by every device which the love of amusement could suggest and luxury procure—the broken, enfeebled state both of body and mind of his be-

Digitized by Google

reaved uncle—all told him a tale of human life, of the uncertainty of human happiness, which could not be read with indifference by one of Trevelyan's turn of mind.

Both Lord Launceston and Lady Augusta received him with marked kindness, the former, in his joy at seeing him, with imbecile confusion constantly addressing him by the name of his lost son.

Trevelyan, greatly distressed by this mistake, looked fearfully towards his cousin, dreading the effect that the sound of that often-repeated name, now made sacred by death, might produce; but either Augusta concealed her feelings, or else, used to her father's strange confusions of the past and present, she had ceased to be affected by them; for, after quietly endeavouring two or three times to rectify his blunders, apparently thinking the case was hopeless, she with perfect composure gave up the attempt.

Trevelyan was so much shocked and pained by all he saw and heard, that he heartily rejoiced when the sound of the dressing-bell put an end to this first disagreeable hour of arrival, and restored him for a time to that solitude which he felt his spirits needed.

There was no visiter then at Trevelyan castle but himself, and, when he and his two relations sat down to dinner, surrounded by all the pomp and ceremony of a large establishment, who by their sable garments looked like attendants on a funeral, again the melancholy of the whole scene pressed painfully on his mind.

They had hardly begun their repast when the bells of the village-church struck up a merry peal; Lord Launceston gave a sudden violent start, and with querulous nervousness impatiently demanded what those bells meant, and how any one dared to ring them without his orders?

"My Lord," said the steward, going up to him, "I believe they are ringing them in honour of General Trevelyan's arrival."

"Good God!" hastily exclaimed Trevelyan, guessing directly what feelings might have been excited in his uncle's mind from the manner in which the joyous sounds had painfully vibrated even on his heart. "For heaven's sake," said he, in a low voice to the steward, "send and stop them directly."

Digitized by Google

The servant was hurrying away to obey Trevelyan's orders, when Lord Launceston called him back, "No, no—stop—true, I had forgot. General Trevelyan is now the next representative of my family. They are quite right—yes—yes, they are quite right. I ought to have remembered that myself, and I am sure have more reason than most people to rejoice at your safe return home; for, had you been killed in Egypt, as I am sure you well might have been," added he, glancing at his nephew's mutilated arm, "our family titles and honours would, you know, have gone away to some obscure attorney at Dartmouth. I declare it almost makes me sick when I think of it. So the fellows did quite right to ring the bells, only the sound startled me at first, for I do not think they have ever been rung since that day when my poor boy came of age." Then filling his glass, "Come, St. Ives," said he, (again addressing Trevelyan by the name of his son,) "here's to your health, and welcome home again, after all your military exploits. You have paid rather dear for fame certainly, but honourable wounds become a man of family, and he never looks the less handsome for them in fair ladies' eyes, does he Augusta?" Augusta slightly blushed, but said nothing. "By the by," continued Lord Launceston, "it is a great shame they have not given you the Bath. I am sure, if any one is in every way entitled to the honour, it is you."

"Oh, no! my dear sir," said Trevelyan, "that distinction is, I am happy to say, not so easily won. If mere wounds and bravery gave a right to claim it, why there might be whole regiments and ships' companies of such knights formed of the brave soldiers and sailors who were engaged in that expedition.

"That's all very fine talking," said Lord Launceston, "but who thinks of the bravery of the common men? and I still say, I take it so much as a personal affront your being passed over, that whenever I go to town to attend Parliament I shall certainly represent the matter. You would not be the first Knight of the Bath in our family," added he, with a look of exultation. "John, the seventh Earl, my grandfather (your great grandfa-

Digitized by Google

ther, you know,) was a soldier, and was knighted after the battle of Sedgemore; his picture hangs up in the gallery, and I will show it to you after dinner. Egad! now I think of it, I really believe it is like you: is it not Augusta?"

"Perhaps it is, papa," was all Augusta said, without raising her eyes. "It is very strange how likenesses run in families," continued Lord Launceston. "There is a picture of Robert, the sixth Baron Launceston, who was made an Earl in the sixteenth century, that is as like poor St. Ives as if it were painted for him. For my part, I think there is something very respectable in an old established family face (it is the high forehead wich marks our family,) for you don't see family faces run so among the lower orders. To be sure one thing may be, we know nothing about their ancestors or connexions, if indeed they have any at all."

Thus poor Lord Launceston, his spirits raised by the presence of his nephew, the only being who could now save his family, of which he was so vain, from utter extinction; and his mind solely occupied by that one subject, talked on till dinner was over, when, taking Trevelyan's arm, "Come," said he, "I will now show you your likeness, Earl John."

"There," he continued, when they reached the gallery, "don't you see the insignia of the Bath over his armour?"

Trevelyan did not observe the picture, for next to it a portrait of Vandyke's directly caught his eye. It was one of those graceful flowing female forms he loved to paint; the dark curls of her jet black hair hung on each side of her snowy neck, and the brilliant eyes seemed to sparkle with intelligence. The picture rivetted Trevelyan's attention, whether producing in his mind pain or pleasure, he could hardly have told.

"Ay, that is a fine painting," said Lord Launceston, observing what had attracted his nephew's observation; "it is my great great aunt, by the mother's side, a Howard, you know. By the by, what is become of that handsome girl who was with you when you were here last?—I have forgotten her name."

Trevelyan started; it seemed as if his uncle had read

Digitized by Google

his inmost thoughts, for in truth he had, while gazing on the lovely picture, totally forgotten Lord Launceston and all his ancestors, whether by father's or mother's side, his thoughts being entirely occupied by the remembrance of Theresa. Lord Launceston again repeated his question respecting the name of Trevelyan's young friend, "Theresa—Miss Howard," he replied, with some emotion, for it was the first time for two years that he had heard that beloved name pronounced either by himself or others.

"She was a devilish fine girl," continued Lord Launceston; "poor St. Ives had a great fancy to her, I saw that quite plain, but I put an end to it at once. I declare I prefer even what has happened to me to the possibility of such a misfortune as my son forming so disgraceful an alliance. In fact, people of that description should not be allowed to go about the world; for it is very wrong running the risk of all the mischief they may do in old families. But what is become of her? Is she still with your sister?"

"She is married," said Trevelyan, in a low voice. "She is now Lady Herbert Leslie."

"Oh! ay, true," rejoined his uncle: "I remember now hearing all about it; but since my poor boy died, I think I forget every thing. But do tell me how came Lord Leslie's father (I forget his name) to agree to any thing so improper? Was it his eldest son?"

"No, the second," replied Trevelyan.

"Well, that is not quite so bad, but still such a total dereliction of all principle is quite shocking, and will ruin the aristocracy of England. Then," after a pause, "St. Ives—Frederick I mean—you must marry now. It was all very well running wild about the world when you had nothing to look to but your profession; but now you really owe it to me, to yourself, and to our family, to marry. But we will talk of that another time," he continued; "I feel myself rather tired now, and we will go and join Augusta in the drawing-room.

When there, seated in his arm-chair, and while still prosing about his ancestors, Lord Launceston soon fell fast asleep, and the two cousins were left *tête-à-tête*.

Digitized by Google

And many a dull melancholy evening did Trevelyan now pass in this manner, with his uncle slumbering on one side of him, and his cousin embroidering on the other. Lady Augusta was *remarkably* well informed, but her information seemed only to have made her conversation the less interesting by depriving it of all originality. She was also *remarkably* sensible, but it was such heavy matter-of-fact sense, that one longed for some trait of folly or thoughtlessness to relieve the monotony of her discretion; however, she was certainly an excellent daughter, being perfect clock-work in her attentions to her father. Her arm was offered to him, and his footstool brought to him, exactly at the same moment every evening; his breakfast was ready for him exactly at the same moment every morning, and she daily read the long dull debates with most exemplary patience and resignation. Everything in short with Augusta seemed to be done by rule, and consequently each day was precisely the same as its predecessor. At a stated hour the low pony-chaise came regularly every afternoon to the door, when Lord Launceston and Augusta, accompanied by Trevelyan on horseback, drove about the place, visiting the plantations, the farms, and the late improvements. To Lord Launceston every object told the same tale, as he saw everything around him only through the medium of *self*, as being *his* plans, *his* possessions, *his* achievements! and, having now turned his mind towards Trevelyan as his heir and representative, all remembrance of his own lost son seemed entirely to fade away. He was ever recurring to the subject of Trevelyan's marriage, and even occasionally went so far as to venture on vague hints respecting the possibility of a union between him and his cousin Augusta, and the incalculable advantages which such a marriage would secure to the family and estate, besides the natural gratification which it would afford to himself.

One day when Augusta was confined to the house by indisposition, and when the uncle and nephew were in consequence left to a *tête-à-tête* drive, Lord Launceston made his attack in a still more direct manner. They had been charged by his daughter with some message to the mistress of the village-school, (for Augusta had of

Digitized by Google

course a school,) and this school she visited regularly, and herself examined the children; and she had also many plans and regulations for the benefit of the poor around, all most excellent: but still, when she appeared among them, she was welcomed with reverential curtesies rather than smiles of gratitude; and all the children's eye were directly fixed in alarm on their books instead of on the countenance of their benefactress.

The message to the school-mistress was duly delivered, and Lord Launceston and Trevelyan proceeded on their drive.

"Augusta is an excellent girl, faith," said the former after a pause; "how few in her elevated situation take so much trouble about the poor people!—and she understands it all so well; why she is as good a man of business as myself—knows all about the estate. She will be an invaluable wife to any one who has the luck to win her."

Trevelyan made no comment on this remark; and after a moment's silence his uncle continued: "I have been thinking, Frederick, that it would make us all very happy if you were to marry Augusta—it would be such an excellent thing for the family, and if you don't happen to be what is called desperately in love with her, what does that signify? and, faith! I think she likes you —I have always thought it. When you were abroad in Egypt there was such an inquiring for news of the army and fleet, such a reading of newspapers—and I must say, you may go farther and fare worse in the way of a wife. You know she will have the whole of what was settled on the younger children, forty thousand pounds: now it is a great pity all that should be lost to the property if it can be prevented, and she is, besides, as like your grandmother as she can stare, who was, you know, a Vernon. Now I require no answer to this plan of mine at present, only just turn it over in your mind and think quietly of my advice. Marry you must, and that soon, otherwise I shall not live to see the happy day; and as you do not seem to know, or care for, any one in particular, I am sure you could not find a better wife than Augusta will most certainly make you."

Digitized by Google

Trevelyan did not reply to this direct attack, for what could he say?—There was not a fault to be found with Augusta, but—that she was totally different from Theresa.—No objection whatever could be made to the plan proposed, but, that with Theresa had ended all his dreams of love and marriage. Trevelyan therefore contented himself with thanking his uncle for his flattering kindness; and, the remainder of their drive being performed in total silence, Lord Launceston soon fell fast asleep, leaving Trevelyan to his own reflections.

Whether it was owing to any chill which Lord Launceston then received, or to some sudden derangement of health could not be ascertained, but on that very evening he seemed oppressed and unwell, and the next day had a serious attack of giddiness and fainting; an eminent physician from Truro was immediately sent for, who directly prescribed bleeding, by which Lord Launceston seemed much relieved, and in the course of a few days he rallied sufficiently to leave his room and resume his usual habits; but, after reaching that point of amendment, he made no further progress towards recovery, continuing weak and depressed.

All this naturally threw Augusta and Trevelyan into constant association, as they had now one common interest and object. They together talked over the symptoms of Lord Launceston's illness, together consulted upon the necessity of further medical advice, and together planned what would be most conducive to the comfort and amusement of the invalid. To leave his uncle and cousin under these circumstances was impossible, and thus week after week crept on, and Trevelyan was still an inmate of the castle. Indeed he had now become so entirely domesticated within its walls, that he seemed in a great manner to be considered as the master of the house; for, his uncle being now totally unequal to any exertion of mind, he referred every matter of business to him. The servants also seemed to look to him as the person from whom they were to receive their definitive orders, and the Lady Augusta herself appeared to wish that it should be so.

Thus passed the remainder of the summer and great part of the autumn. Augusta was always the same calm,

Digitized by Google

sensible, and irreproachable person, with the same uniform spirits, and immoveable temper; she never seemed to feel the dulness of her present life, never appeared weary of attending on her invalid and often irritable father. It was under such circumstances, perhaps, that her character was likely to appear to the best advantage in Trevelyan's eyes, and he was no way unwilling to do full justice to her many excellent qualities; the less so, possibly, from that natural bias to vanity inherent in man: for if there was a being whom Augusta seemed to prefer, it was *himself*: if ever anything could be said to give her pleasure, it was *his* society. Again and again did Lord Launceston return to his favourite plan of a union between his daughter and nephew, and once he even alluded to it when they were both present. Evidently much discomposed, Augusta hastily left the room, and, when Trevelyan afterwards joined her, he saw traces of tears on her face, while her manner towards him was unusually distant and embarrassed.

What man but must be flattered by the marked preference of almost any woman? What man but will grow to think that there must be some degree of superiority in her who gives decided proofs of considering him superior to all the world besides? All these various attacks upon Trevelyan—for even his sister had of late frequently exhorted him to marriage—began at last to force the *possibility* at least of such an event upon his mind, and his thoughts were the more constantly occupied by the subject from his very indifference towards the person in question, for he had none of those decided feelings either of partiality or disapprobation, which could have enabled him at once either to come to some favourable decision, or to dismiss the matter entirely from his thoughts. If he allowed those thoughts to wander back to the past, then, indeed, he felt no doubts as to his conduct with regard to the future; for one single image there filled the lovely picture, and that image certainly bore no resemblance whatever to Augusta: but he felt that the past had become a mere dream of the imagination, and that he was now called upon to act his part in the dull realities of life.

Digitized by Google

Who, however, can bid adieu even to a delightful dream without regret? Who that has once known the rapture of *love* but must look with dismay on a *marriage de raison*?

The state of Trevelyan's mind may perhaps be better understood by his own description of his feelings, and we will therefore subjoin a letter, which he addressed about this time to his sister.

"Trevelyan Castle, Sept. 28.

"ALL you say about Augusta, and about my future situation in this world, is perfectly true, and yet I cannot make up my mind to the result you desire. If I were to tell you that happiness is a thing which I have ceased to think of for myself, you would I know chide me, and perhaps, indeed, even *you* would not believe the assertion to be true—but so it is.—I had once raised my expectations of human felicity too high to be content with what must now fall so very far short; and therefore, I prefer renouncing entirely all thoughts of domestic happiness, and remaining the solitary being I am.

"I know you will say that, if such are my feelings of indifference with regard to myself, I should then turn my thoughts to the happiness of others, and should fulfil the anxious wishes of my uncle. I feel I should do so, and I also do full justice to the many excellent qualities which Augusta possesses, but a vague *feeling*, which I can hardly define, and which I do not allow even to myself, makes me shrink from—from, in short, being myself bound by *any* ties.

"I know this is sad weakness, perhaps even worse, and that it is culpable when *she* is indissolubly bound to another. But still, whenever I think of Augusta as my wife, *her* image will obtrude itself before my mind and it makes an idiot of me. My poor uncle does not rally at all, and his mind seems failing even faster than his body; one set of ideas now alone occupy him—his family, his property, his honours, and how still to preserve them in a manner to himself. Poor St. Ives is quite forgotten by him. I believe I of all regret him most, for had he but lived I should have remained in my comparative happy insignificance. "F. T."

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER II.

——————Time
Shall steady my sight to the grief it would shun;
Bid the glowing, dear dream of felicity fly,
And turn on ambition or science mine eye:
Then I 'll aim at those heights I for thee could despise,
And harden my heart to be great or be wise.—*Old Song.*

About a month after the receipt of her brother's last letter, Miss Trevelyan was not a little startled on receiving another from him, containing the following intelligence:—

"Trevelyan Castle, October 30.

"The die is cast,—I have proposed—I am accepted—it is all settled. My poor uncle is at least made happy, he has just joined our hands, given us his blessing; my mind is in too confused a state to be able calmly to dwell on the step which I have taken—at all events it is now irrevocable.

"If Lord Launceston continues as much better as he is at present, I shall probably see you before long; of course there will be some necessary business to settle with lawyers, and as, in my uncle's situation, all trouble and unnecessary details must be spared him, the best plan will be for me to go myself to town and meet the men of business; therefore in about a week or ten days you may expect me at Richmond.

"How little did I think when we last parted, that I should return to you engaged to Augusta! It is difficult not to be inclined to become a predestinarian. We seem to be allowed so little choice in what concerns us most—we are tantalized with an appearance of freedom of will, when in fact we have it not.—God grant that all may be for the best!

"F. T."

Digitized by Google

Lord Launceston continuing in that state of amendment which allowed of Trevelyan's departure from Cornwall, he took leave of him and of his future bride, and repaired in the first place to his sister's at Richmond. Miss Trevelyan thought her brother much improved in looks since she had seen him—now nearly three months ago—his spirits too were certainly better, and yet there appeared to be a something forced about them, which it pained her to observe; he never alluded in any way to the past, and she could not help remarking that he talked much less about his destined wife than his invalid uncle. Rarely, when at Richmond, did he leave his sister's fireside, although she more than once rallied him on his laziness; but he seemed now on principle to partake of her sedentary habits, evidently dreading the recollections which every object in that neighbourhood forced upon him.

He was detained above a month by necessary business, and passed the time either at his sister's, or at Lord Launceston's house in town, which was now to be considered as his own.

At length, about the beginning of November, Trevelyan was again on the road to Cornwall. As he drew near the end of his journey he felt—and he joyfully welcomed the feeling—certain emotions of pleasure on returning to what had now become to him a home. The business in which he had been engaged had familiarized his mind to the prospect of all the endearing ties of wife, children, and family; and the contemplation of such interests could not fail to have full power over one with so warm a heart as Trevelyan possessed, or to produce feelings of goodwill, even of tenderness towards her, who was to be the link to bind him to all these charities of life. Augusta's character was also one of those which, when contemplated from a distance, might possibly inspire stronger feelings of regard and interest than when brought to the near view of daily intercourse; for the greater moral virtues necessarily then fall back, or at least become the invisible foundations of the qualities which attract us, and we look for those lighter charms of mind and manners which so delightfully dress up the dulness of ordinary existence:

Digitized by Google

Light wit, which plays along the calm of life,
And stirs its languid surface into smiles;
The happy, grateful spirit that improves
And brightens every gift by fortune given;
That wander where it will with those it loves,
Makes every place a home—and home a heaven.

There was never a fault to be found either with Augusta's manners or conduct; but there was always a something wanting—that something which to the eye of love has but too often the power to "cover a multitude of sins."

Trevelyan's heart beat as he drove through the village which led to the park-lodge, and was welcomed by the smiling faces and respectful obeisances of its inhabitants; and he even eagerly looked out of the carriage window in search of his uncle and cousin, who might, he thought, be now returning from their usual morning drive. Augusta had probably been watching for his arrival, for she met him in the hall, and the additional tinge of colour in her cheeks evinced the pleasure which his presence gave her. For the first time then, as he tenderly pressed her hand in his, Trevelyan really fancied he loved her,—and, had Augusta been one who knew how to improve this advantage gained over her future husband's better feelings, she might now have bound him to her for ever, if not by the rapturous ties of passion, at least by those of affectionate regard.

But Augusta, unwittingly, herself weakened the power over Trevelyan's heart, which the recollection of her many good qualities had gained when absent from her; and he again felt in her society that painful solitude of mind for which nothing can compensate. His spirits, therefore, which on his first return to Trevelyan Castle had been raised without any effort on his part to what they were even in his best days, again sunk to their now habitual level, and at times an involuntary feeling of dismay came over him as the day fixed on for their wedding approached.

It had been settled that their nuptials should be celebrated on the second of December, (Augusta's birthday,) and every preliminary preparation was consequently now in progress.

Digitized by Google

Both Lord Launceston and his daughter warmly pressed Miss Trevelyan's joining them immediately, in order to be present at the ceremony, but Trevelyan, for various reasons, rejected the idea. His sister's health was not now equal to so long a journey in winter; and the consciousness that the presence of one so well acquainted with all the past events of his life, would render it more difficult to him to harden himself against feelings which his principles told him he now should conquer, determined him at once to decline the proposal in her name.

As for Augusta, she was one of those strangely constituted beings who had never in her life formed any intimate friendship, and who had never felt the want of such a comfort; so that she actually could think of no one whose presence on such an occasion might have been a gratification to herself from their known interest in her welfare. Therefore, after various discussions on the subject of the approaching marriage, it was finally decided that the ceremony itself should be private, and in consequence that Mr. Penrhyn and his family, with whom, as distant connexions of Lord Launceston's, more than ordinary habits of intercourse had been kept up, should, with the wife and daughter of the officiating clergyman, alone be present. It was further arranged that the Penrhyns were to remain at the castle after the celebration of the nuptials, while the new-married couple should repair to their house for about a week, Lord Launceston appearing by no means inclined to accord them longer leave of absence, and Trevelyan, perhaps, feeling no greater wish to petition for it.

A splendid marriage, such as would have gratified Lord Launceston's feelings of family pride, being therefore, under all circumstances, out of the question, and indeed the situation of the parties as to near relationship allowing of no long train of respective aunts, uncles, and cousins, Lord Launceston resolved, in order to gratify his love of show and ostentation, to celebrate this important event in his family in another manner. Orders were in the first place issued that all the household, who had with their master hitherto remained in deep mourning for the deceased heir, should, on the auspicious day which was

Digitized by Google

to give to Lord Launceston another son, resume their splendid liveries. Bells were to be rung, oxen roasted whole, and bonfires lit in every direction on the second of December, and a plentiful repast and splendid ball were to be given to the tenants, their families, and the immediate neighbours on the day when the bride and bridegroom should return to Trevelyan Castle. In short, the same scene of gay festivity which had taken place on the celebration of poor St. Ives's majority was now to be once more enacted at the marriage of his sister.

Trevelyan again and again remonstrated against all these outward demonstrations of joy; he shrunk almost with alarm from such preparations for happiness: for disappointment had rendered him superstitious, and his mind painfully recurred to those former rejoicings, which had been but the prelude to a funeral. And although the fond lover, in the first raptures of happiness, with his bride at his side, may delight in those flattering expressions of joy and exultation around him, which accord so well with the buoyant feelings of his own heart; yet, in a marriage contracted under such circumstances as Trevelyan's, any useless parade of felicity could not but be painful. He also dreaded the effects of so much fatigue and excitement on Lord Launceston's enfeebled nerves and body, and brought forward that objection when advising Augusta to persuade her father to relinquish his projected entertainments.

But Augusta, who had no small share of that hereditary pride of birth and family which prompted all this display in her father, took the matter up in quite a different light; she said Lord Launceston was so bent upon it, that she was certain that opposition to his wishes would do him more harm than any excitement of pleasure; that, for her part, she quite agreed with him in thinking it right and proper that such demonstrations of joy should take place; "for I am sure," added she, with more of sentiment and *abandon* than Trevelyan had ever before witnessed in her, "I at least have every reason for wishing to celebrate joyfully the day on which I become your wife." Such a speech, and from the cold formal Au-

Digitized by Google

gusta, could not fail to silence Trevelyan, and the preparations for the approaching nuptials proceeded.

The first of December arrived. "Twenty-four hours more," thought Trevelyan, when he that morning rose from sleep, "and my fate in life is fixed for ever!" His head fell on his clasped hands, and he knelt in prayer before the Disposer of all events, but his prayers were made in "those groanings which cannot be uttered," for his mind was in too perturbed a state to allow him to form one distinct petition. He immediately left the house, and walked for some time in the adjoining wood, expecting every moment to be summoned home by the usual breakfast-bell. Eleven o'clock struck, and he still continued pacing backwards and forwards on the terrace-walk before the drawing room windows—but no bell rung.

Fancying at last, from the unusual lateness of the hour, that, while engaged in his own reflections, the sound of it might have escaped him, he was just returning to the house, when he saw the steward hastening towards him with disturbed looks. "Lady Augusta begs you will come to her directly," said he. "My lord is not so well this morning, and he has just had a return of his fainting-fit."

Much alarmed, Trevelyan hurried to his uncle's apartment, and found the servant's story but too true. Lord Launceston, half dressed, was lying back in his arm-chair, with his eyes fixed, apparently unconscious of all around him, while his daughter at his side was, with wonderful presence of mind, administering everything which could possibly restore him.

"Send off directly for Doctor Beattie," said she to Trevelyan, as he entered the room, "and in the mean time, I am so sure that taking some blood would be the best thing to be done, I think we may safely send for the village apothecary to cup my father." Trevelyan took hold of his uncle's hand—felt his pulse—and after some doubt and consultation, they sent for the nearest medical man to come immediately.

Lord Launceston appeared in some degree to revive after being bled, and when the physician from Truro ar-

Digitized by Google

rived in the afternoon he was at least no worse. Dr. Beattie greatly approved of the prompt measures which had been resorted to, pronounced the attack to be of the same nature as the last, although more serious; but still, although he could not deny that there was great danger, he said the case was not quite hopeless. Augusta did not leave her father till near midnight, when, at Trevelyan's earnest entreaties, she retired to rest, as he promised to keep watch at his uncle's bed-side during her absence.

And no one was better fitted to be at that moment a *garde malade* than Trevelyan, at least as far as wakefulness may be considered a recommendation, for he was in a state of mind, which would at all events have precluded the possibility of sleep. All the vague presentiments of evil which had of late oppressed his spirits appeared to be now realized. It seemed to him that it was decreed he and Augusta should not be united—that an interposition of Heaven itself had stopped their marriage!

Trevelyan started, shocked at the thought which had thus forced itself upon him, still more shocked, that at the bottom of his heart a feeling (rebel to his will) made him find relief in the idea. He rose from his seat, in order to break the chain of his thoughts, and endeavour to forget the unreasonable, the ungrateful sensation, which had for an instant thus involuntarily shot through his soul.

The clock struck one: it was now the second of December! *that* day, on which he was to have plighted his faith to the faultless Augusta!—*that* day, which was to have fulfilled the wishes of her worldly father, and there he lay in the stupor of illness, scarcely aware of his own existence. Trevelyan felt his thoughts to be too dangerous companions to hold any parley with, and therefore had recourse to a book, to which, during the many lonely hours of the night, which he now passed in the sick chamber, he did his best to fix his attention. The medicine which the physician had ordered, and which was administered to the patient at stated intervals by his servant, who remained in the adjoining room, seemed to have the desired effect, for Lord Launceston passed a

Digitized by Google

quiet night, without any recurrence of the most alarming symptoms.

As soon as it was daylight next morning, Trevelyan heard a gentle knock at the door. It was Augusta, come to relieve him in his attendance on her father. He immediately, though softly, hurried up to her, with a smile on his face, to assure her all was well, giving her also a minute report of how the invalid had passed the night; and then, looking kindly at her, as he clasped her hand in his: he endeavoured thus to express his sympathy and sorrow for the altered circumstances on which they *that* day now met. Augusta slightly blushed, but said nothing, and, drawing him to a more distant part of the room, she, with the most perfect composure of look and manner, said, "Of course, you will stop all the preparations for our marriage; and would it not be right to send directly to the manor-house to let the Penrhyns know what has happened, and that everything is of course now put off?"

Trevelyan, still willing to think that this insensibility was assumed in order to spare him, again with more fondness than before, pressed his intended bride's hand in his, as, with real pity, he looked on the afflicted daughter, suffering, as he thought, under feelings of severe anxiety as well as those of disappointment.

Who but Augusta would not then have sought relief for those feelings in the luxury of tears, and the solace of unrestrained confidence with him, who was on that very day to have been bound to her by the nearest and dearest of all ties!

But Augusta appeared not to have the slightest suspicion of what Trevelyan meant to express by that silent language of kindness, (a language so far more eloquent to the heart than that of words,) and, unmoved, she continued, "If the preparations for entertaining the cottagers cannot now be stopped, I have been thinking that it will be a good plan, rather than the provisions should all be wasted, and the people disappointed, for the bailiff quietly to divide the bread and meat among the poorest families: he has, I believe, a list of those who were to have partaken of the food, if not, I can give it him."

There was something so dreadfully thoughtful and

Digitized by Google

sensible, and so chillingly unsentimental in all this, that involuntarily Trevelyan let go the hand which he had still held in his, and, merely saying he would settle everything, left the room, begging Augusta not to worry herself; an unnecessary injunction, for Augusta, happy woman, never was worried.

Lord Launceston remained in much the same state for above a week. At last, he appeared to rally out of the stupor in which he had hitherto continued, and his bodily strength also improved so far, that Doctor Beattie allowed him to be removed from his bed to an adjoining couch. The first symptom which appeared of returning sensibility and recollection was, his inquiring how many days must still pass before the 2d of December. Trevelyan, to whom this question was addressed, thought it best to humour the mistake, and therefore replied that it still wanted a week of the time. "Oh! then, by the end of the week, I shall be quite well again," said Lord Launceston, "which is fortunate, for I would not have the wedding-day put off for the world; that always brings bad luck."

The week, however, slipped past him without his being yet equal to take any cognizance of time, although he never ceased talking of the future marriage, continually inquiring whether everything was ready for its celebration. At length, after about ten days more had elapsed, and as his ideas became clearer, he began to suspect that he had been deceived, and, forgetting that his own illness was of course the cause of the delay, he grew painfully anxious on the subject, and talked about it to every one, as if to try and detect the true reason for the wedding being thus deferred. Indeed, his irritability on this point increased to such a pitch, and became at last so much a part of his disease, that Doctor Beattie, evidently alarmed about his patient, requested a private interview with General Trevelyan, and, having imparted to him his apprehensions, he ended by strongly recommending that the marriage should take place immediately. "Only let it all be as quiet as possible," added he, "for Lord Launceston is in that state that any violent excitement may be fatal; he must not be moved out of his room,

Digitized by Google

for I should wish as few new objects as possible to meet his eyes just now; but if the ceremony could take place in his own apartment, and with no more witnesses than absolutely necessary, I think it is advisable that it should. And, as a friend even, I really recommend it, for I cannot answer for his lordship's prolonged life, and under these melancholy awkward circumstances, I can well imagine what your feeling of anxiety must be; so if I might venture to interfere in such an affair, which is certainly out of my line," added he, smiling, and kindly taking Trevelyan by the hand, "my advice would be, that you at once speak to Lady Augusta, and try to persuade her to agree to an immediate marriage, although it must now take place under such different auspices from those anticipated. I suppose, of course, all the papers and law part of the business are ready," continued the doctor, "so could you not name to-morrow?"

"To-morrow!" repeated Trevelyan, actually starting.

"Yes, to-morrow," resumed the doctor, in a decided tone, "I really advise that there be no more delay; and I am sure Lady Augusta's excellent sense will point out to her the propriety, the necessity indeed, of this precipitation. I will, if you like, be myself here at any time you will name, that I may be at hand in case Lord Launceston should in any way need my assistance, as that will, I think, be a satisfaction to us all."

The calm, the sensible Augusta made no objection to what Doctor Beattie advised, but again returned to the subject of the rejoicings in the village, inquiring whether it would not be better that they should now, in compliance with her father's wishes, take place, as the scene of action would be too far distant from the house for him to be in any way disturbed by the noise, and she knew that his mind was still set upon such a celebration of the event.

Oh! no, for God's sake!" said Trevelyan, hastily interrupting her, and with more of impatience in his manner than he had ever before betrayed, "this is surely not a moment for fêtes and rejoicings. Then, angry with himself for having thus given way to even momentary irritation with his bride, and assuming a smile, he

Digitized by Google

took her hand, saying, "Well, then, I may tell the kind doctor to be here to-morrow by one, for he seems to think that will be the best hour to name, as it will least interfere with Lord Launceston's usual time for reposing before dinner."

One o'clock on the 27th of December was therefore fixed upon. A messenger was immediately despatched to Mr. Penrhyn, to request that he and Mrs. Penrhyn would, if possible, attend as witnesses, and the clergyman was informed that, at half-past twelve o'clock next day, the carriage should be sent to bring him to the castle, as the weather promised to be unfavourable. Winter had already begun, with severity. A chilling north-east wind blew dismally round the house, and the sky was of that uniform sombre hue, which foretells a heavy fall of snow.

When Trevelyan first opened his eyes the next morning, he saw that his anticipations were realized, for the thick flakes were falling fast; the country around was one uniform dazzling sheet of white, and all track of the road across the park had already disappeared. Directions were immediately given to have it cleared as fast as possible, and the carriage ordered to go for the clergyman half an hour earlier than had been first named. Doctor Beattie arrived about one, giving but a bad account of the state of the roads, as the snow balled very disagreeably in the horses' feet, rendering speedy progress impossible. One o'clock, two o'clock struck, and still Mr. and Mrs. Penrhyn did not appear, although they had sent back word by the messenger who had been despatched to them the day before, that they would be at the castle very soon after twelve.

Worried and perplexed, Trevelyan was consulting with the doctor as to what had best be done, when they at length, at a little before three, arrived, having been detained by the snow.

By this time Lord Launceston had unfortunately fallen asleep, and Dr. Beattie advised that he should by no means be disturbed. Nothing could be more awkward, more disagreeable, than all this delay, particularly to one in Trevelyan's state of mind; and again the superstí-

Digitized by Google

tious feeling that their marriage would not take place forced itself upon him. Whether this time he welcomed or repelled the idea, we will not presume to say.

Augusta, who had all this while remained in Lord Launceston's apartment, came in at last to welcome her friends, saying that her father was now awake, that he seemed much refreshed, and was inquiring anxiously whether Mr. Penrhyn was arrived.

"Well then, my dear young lady," said Doctor Beattie, in a low voice to Augusta, "let us lose no more time." Augusta changed colour; and, saying she would return in a few minutes, left the drawing-room, accompanied by Mrs. Penrhyn, while the three gentlemen repaired to Lord Launceston's apartment.

The clergyman, in his surplice, and with the open prayer-book in his hand, was there already. Trevelyan involuntarily shuddered when he saw him; a strange expression crossed his face, and he bit his closely-shut lips. Lord Launceston held out his hand to his future son-in-law. "I wish you joy, my dear Frederick—a happy day this to us all; and as soon as I am well enough, we will have all our rejoicings and gay doings; but where is Augusta?" added he impatiently, "send for Augusta."

Augusta appeared. The clergyman took his station at a small table, beside which two footstools were placed: he beckoned to the bride and bridegroom to advance towards them, and immediately began the ceremony.

Trevelyan had read and re-read the marriage service over and over, in the hope of familiarizing himself to it, and thus avoiding certain recollections and associations which he so much dreaded, especially at a moment when he wished his thoughts to be particularly collected; but notwithstanding these precautions, when he now again heard it delivered in a solemn voice, the past rushed on his mind with an overwhelming force. Those words "Who gives this woman away?" which had before rent his soul with such agony, now again vibrated to the very bottom of his heart.—The forms of Theresa Howard and Herbert Leslie flitted before his dizzy brain—and, with a still colder, more trembling hand than that which he had

Digitized by Google

then united another bride to her bridgroom, he now plighted his faith to Augusta.

The clergyman, observing General Trevelyan's excessive agitation, shortened the ceremony as much as possible, and in a very few minutes all was over.

A pause and dead silence ensued. No one seemed to know what to say or do. The Penrhyns had too much good taste to come forward at such a moment, and under such circumstances, with common-place congratulations; besides, having been cautioned by Doctor Beattie to avoid every thing that might agitate Lord Launceston, fear silenced them, and indeed they, as well as the kind-hearted Doctor, were too much overcome with the scene they had just witnessed, to be able immediately to recover the power of speaking.

A melancholy marriage seems an anomaly in human life, and the marriage of Frederick and Augusta Trevelyan was in every respect most melancholy. Poor Lord Launceston, enfeebled in body, and nearly imbecile in mind, lay on his couch, gazing vacantly on the bride and bridegroom, seemingly perfectly unconscious of the tears which stole down his wan emaciated cheeks, and still more of the feeling by which they were occasioned. His only surviving child, brought up in all the pomp and ceremony of rank and riches, celebrating thus the prominent event of her life in the dark chamber of sickness, without any accustomed train of attending friends and family, or any of the usual gay parade of marriage; and, above all, the strange unaccountable agitation of the bridegroom, his blanched cheek and quivering lips, all conspired to throw a gloom over the scene, which could not fail to strike those of any feeling.

Lord Launceston at length himself broke the silence; he beckoned to his son and daughter to come to him—again joined their hands, and kindly kissing Augusta, seemed to be giving her his blessing; he then held out his hand to the Penrhyns, and, after thanking them for having come, he made signs as if he wished to be left alone. They immediately took the hint, and moved towards the door. Their departure first roused Trevelyan

Digitized by Google

from the trance, in which he had hitherto appeared to be lost, and he hastily followed them out of the room.

Mr. Penrhyn, attributing his nervous emotion merely to the dismal auspices under which his nuptials had been celebrated, and thinking all the better of him for the feeling he thus betrayed, the instant they had left Lord Launceston's apartment, went most kindly up to him, and endeavoured to dissipate the melancholy impression.

"Cheer up, my dear sir," said he, "all will be well. I assure you I have found Lord Launceston much better than I expected; and now this joyful, but nervous, event is over, you will see that he will rally, and you know the old saying, 'a bad beginning makes a good ending.' But now let me ring for the carriage, for it is near four, and we must make our way home as fast as possible."

"Really," said Trevelyan, "you had better not think of returning to the manor-house this evening; it is getting dark, and you know how bad the roads were even when you came, and the snow is still falling."

"A thousand thanks," replied Mr. Penrhyn, "but we must return home to-night."

"Then only wait till I order an additional pair of horses to your carriage," said Trevelyan; "Lord Launceston now never uses them, and it is really doing the animals a service to give them some exercise; I should have thought of this before, but"——

"Indeed, my dear General Trevelyan," replied Mr. Penrhyn, laughing, "it is more than allowable that a lover on his wedding day should forget his friends. I will not, however, refuse so good an offer, since you say it will really be no inconvenience, and with four horses there is no fear."

Mr. Penrhyn's carriage, thus prepared for difficulties, and with Lord Launceston's coachman mounted on another horse to guide the postilions on their way, now appeared already white with the fast falling snow; the men, though well wrapped up, blue with cold, and the horses holding their ears and tails close to their shivering bodies, as if to defend them from the pitiless storm.

When predisposed to melancholy, the most trifling incident increases the feeling, and Trevelyan could not re-

Digitized by Google

sist the dismal presentiment of misfortune which every circumstance of his wedding-day seemed to forbode. "Well, God bless you all," said Mr. Penrhyn, as he took his leave of Trevelyan; "if the weather mends I will ride over some day soon, and see how you all get on; and this time next year we will have a jolly celebration of your marriage, to make up for all the contretemps of to-day."

They drove off—in a few minutes Dr. Beattie also departed, accompanied by the clergyman, whose house he necessarily passed. "I have administered a composing draught to my patient," said he, on taking leave of Trevelyan, "as a precaution against any possible evil consequences from the recent agitating ceremony, and have now left him in a very comfortable state, under the care of Lady Augusta, who is all that is good and attentive; so once again allow me to offer you my most sincere congratulations;" and shaking the bridegroom by the hand, he followed his companion into the chaise.

Trevelyan remained for some time, as if stupified, on the steps of the house, watching in unconscious abstraction the progress of the carriages. But, at length roused from his trance by the intensity of the cold and the snow beating in his face, he returned to the now empty drawing-room. It was already darkened by the gloom of the evening; there was not a sound to be heard but the dismal whistling of the wind. The confused recollection of the event which had just taken place benumbed his faculties, and, sinking overpowered into a chair, he there remained alone with his bewildered thoughts—the wedded husband of Augusta!

END OF VOL. I.

Digitized by Google

TREVELYAN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"A MARRIAGE IN HIGH LIFE."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME II.

PHILADELPHIA:
CAREY, LEA & BLANCHARD.
.....
1834.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

TREVELYAN.

PART II.—CONTINUED.

CHAPTER III.

The keenest pangs the wretched find,
Are raptures to the dreary void,
The leafless desert of the mind,
The waste of feelings unemployed.—Byron.

Lord Launceston did not survive his daughter's marriage above three weeks, thus verifying Dr. Beattie's prognostication, when, notwithstanding the momentary improvement in his patient, he recommended her hurried nuptials. During those three weeks Augusta's attentions to her father were unremitting, but when her attendance upon him was closed by death, she met the event with perfect composure, as if her mind had been too much familiarized with the prospect to be deeply affected when it was realized.

She immediately expressed a wish that every possible mark of respect should be paid to her deceased parent. Trevelyan well knew what she meant, and accordingly gave orders for a pompous funeral pageant; for, although such demonstrations of grief and respect were not at all accordant with his feelings, yet on this occasion it was every way impossible for *him* to object to what gratified those of his wife, if they were to be thus gratified; and, strange to say, they were.

After her father had breathed his last, Augusta did not again steal to the bed of death to pray by his lifeless corpse. She did not alone revisit his now deserted apartment, and weep in his empty chair, but, from the half-

Digitized by Google

closed windows of her room she looked out on the long mournful procession with pride and respect, and felt no small degree of complacency in the thought that she was thus proving to the world her filial piety and affection.

When, at the last turning of the road, the hearse finally disappeared from her sight, perhaps a few natural tears then stole down her cheeks, but the satisfactory conviction that she had done her duty soon dried them up; and with her sense of duty to all appearance ended also her tenderness of feeling. The very day after the funeral, she, as a thing of course, left her own apartment, and resumed her accustomed habits and occupations; nor did she ever miss many an object which, being connected in Trevelyan's mind with her deceased parent, he had previously to her return into the public part of the house carefully removed.

Thus, without any great revolution having apparently taken place in the existence of either Augusta or Frederick Trevelyan during the last six months which they had passed together, they on a sudden found themselves possessors of Trevelyan Castle as Lord and Lady Launceston. And so quiet had been the transition from his former life, so little had Trevelyan, previous to these six months, contemplated the possibility even of any of those events which now placed him in so different a situation, that it was some time before he had sufficiently recovered from what appeared to him a strange dream, to be fully aware of the reality of his present existence and prospects.

To Lady Launceston the change came, if possible, still more quietly, as she hardly seemed to feel it all, or the means by which it had been effected. There is scarcely a daughter who, on seeing her husband thus at once established in her father's place, and even addressed by his name, would not, at least at first, be overcome by many a burst of feeling at the startling substitution, much as her heart might overflow with affection for the individual thus in a manner concentrating in himself every sacred tie. But Augusta's calm disposition was a stranger to all such useless self-inflicted sufferings, and the very first time that Trevelyan heard himself called by his new title it was by Augusta herself, when delivering some order to

Digitized by Google

a servant concerning him. It was no doubt quite right and proper she should thus designate him, for such was certainly now his name; but as the sound proceeded from her lips Trevelyan involuntarily contracted his brow, and a vague, painful feeling of disappointment chilled his heart.

The Penrhyns came, and all the neighbours followed, after a time, to pay their respects and offer due condolence and congratulations to the new Lord and Lady Launceston. Augusta received them all with proper courtesy, and returned all their visits at the proper time and in proper order. She continued also in the same exemplary manner to fulfil all her duties to her poorer neighbours, lecturing her schoolmistress, ordering the children's hair to be cut and their faces washed, and doing that in the same manner, and with precisely the same feelings, with which she dispensed food to the hungry and clothes to the naked. In every thing that concerned the place and her domestic arrangements she scrupulously applied to her husband for his approbation and sanction, as to the lord and master of all, (however much in practice she might quietly adhere to her own original intention,) and moreover, in justice to her it should be added, that, as far as her nature allowed, she testified her satisfaction in having a lord and master to whose *supposed* authority it was certainly no disgrace to submit.

Thus quietly passed the remainder of the winter, unmarked by any peculiar joy or sorrow, for life ever moved quietly on with Augusta; she was blessed with a most perfect equanimity of temper, no thoughtless word or action entailing perplexities and regrets ever ruffled its uniform placidity, no occasional exhiliration or depression of spirits ever varied her manners or conversation, so that if she imparted no charm to daily life, she at least never disturbed its peace.

It was settled that Lord and Lady Launceston should repair to London after Easter, in order that the former should take his seat in the House of Lords, and preparations for their change of residence were accordingly made. Just before they left Cornwall, an event took place, which at the same time that it convulsed all Europe, especially agitated Trevelyan. This event was

Digitized by Google

the sudden rupture of the peace of Amiens, and that lawless measure of vindictive vengeance on the part of the First Consul, by which, in flagrant breach of the law of nations, he arrested all the English travellers found on the Continent at that moment. When Trevelyan read this intelligence in the public papers, his first thoughts were for Theresa. Where was she? and to what evil might this arbitrary political measure expose her?" So sudden and so strong were the private apprehensions to which this piece of public news had given rise, that in his first alarm Trevelyan was on the point of betraying his feelings to his wife, but on turning towards her, the calm countenance which then met his eyes immediately recalled him to his senses, reminding him that Augusta was certainly the last person to whom he could impart his present anxiety.

Never once had Theresa been named, or even alluded to between them. On Trevelyan's first return to Cornwall, after the Egyptian expedition, many inquiries were made both by his uncle and cousin after Miss Trevelyan, but with respect to his other former companion, not a word had ever been said by either, except *that* once, when the chance likeness to Theresa in Vandyke's portrait and the coincidence of surnames had suddenly recalled her both to Lord Launceston's and his nephew's recollection.

Augusta had no doubt observed Trevelyan's admiration for his beautiful charge, during the visit which the trio had paid together at Trevelyan Castle three years before; for having even then fixed her mind on her cousin as her future husband, her jealous feelings had rendered her more alive on that subject than she habitually was on others. But whether she had (or indeed *could* have) any idea of the extent of Trevelyan's feelings for his ward, and of the pangs which her loss inflicted, we cannot pretend to say, for Augusta was not of a communicative disposition, and admitted no one into her confidence when she could possibly help doing so. That she never once pronounced Theresa's name, or in any manner alluded to her existence, is, however, certain, whatever may have been the feelings which dictated this reserve; and Trevelyan on his part had no wish to start

Digitized by Google

a subject, which, notwithstanding all his efforts, still agitated his soul. Therefore, as if by mutual consent Theresa Howard was to them as if she had not been.

As we have already said, Trevelyan was soon aware that all attempts at similarity of sentiment between him and his wife were vain, and that it was therefore totally impossible to establish with her that union of heart and mind so necessary to the happiness of married life. But his feelings of regret on this their want of sympathy were now not unmingled with those of self-reproach; for although he had certainly never been invited by Augusta to any thing like open confidence, and could therefore hitherto plead to himself her reserve as, in some degree, excusing his own, his conscience now told him he was decidedly the aggressor, as he was deliberately, systematically resolving on the concealment of feelings which might reasonably be deemed treasonable towards a wife; the object of this mystery being one whom he had adored —one who still ——. But it was a subject on which Lady Launceston could not possibly understand him. So why torture himself by what might after all prove only a dangerous disclosure!—For if he on principle did attempt to explain his present sentiments with regard to Theresa, Augusta would inevitably misconstrue them, and possibly be led by her jealous imagination even beyond the truth. Influenced therefore by these considerations, Trevelyan at length resolved on overcoming what he now again deemed his overstrained scruples of conscience, and on persevering in that silence and reserve which seemed to have been established between them by Augusta herself. A fatal wall of separation was thus at the very outset of their married life raised between Lord Launceston and his wife; and the former persuading himself that the peculiarity of his situation exculpated him from all blame, insensibly retreated into a sort of abstracted melancholy of soul, which, by separating his existence from that of others, seemed to himself to exalt it, and at last produced a sort of mysterious enjoyment.

Immediately on their arrival in town, Lord and Lady Launceston drove down to Richmond to visit Miss Trevelyan. She was overjoyed at seeing them, for she had ever

Digitized by Google

been partial to Augusta, the best side of whose character had alone met her indulgent eyes; and having in consequence not only done full justice to her good qualities, but also given her credit for many more than she really possessed, Miss Trevelyan fancied that under her brother's present circumstances she was the fittest person to contribute to his domestic happiness. Besides, as they were now, not only first cousins, but sisters-in-law, Lady Launceston's manner was of course unusually kind and cordial, and Miss Trevelyan in consequence still more deceived with regard to her real disposition.

How often is some mere deficiency in the character thus mistaken for a positive perfection; want of feeling exalted into self-command, and the absence of all interesting warmth of disposition miscalled superior sense and prudence! Hence the success and good name which the cold and indifferent obtain in the world; for never offending by zealous interference in any matters not strictly regarding *themselves*, they escape all those difficulties into which persons of livelier feelings are hurried, "they come into no misfortunes like other folks, they are not plagued like other men."

Richmond always made Trevelyan thoughtful, and his spirits were the more depressed by observing the evident alteration in his sister's looks; he more than once anxiously inquired after her health, thinking she appeared, during the whole of their visit, as if enduring great bodily suffering. But she only laughed at his inquiries, saying, she was never very stout and blooming, and was now of course growing old and infirm; at last, however, seeing she could hardly raise herself from her couch without actual pain, he returned to the charge, entreating her to speak to some medical person if she would not to him.

"Well, as you are so determined to pry into my secrets," said she, smiling, "I will own I have not been very well of late, but I have put myself under Doctor Hume's care, and he will, I dare say, soon set me up again." And then, as if anxious to change the subject, "By the by, Frederick, are you yet established one of the pillars of the state? has the country yet benefited by your sage counsels? I am, I own, a little inclined to be

Digitized by Google

suspicious of a soldier's politics, as they are—naturally I suppose—always advocates for war; but I really hope you," looking at his one arm, "have had enough of that pastime, and may be content."

"Indeed, I quite agree with you," said Augusta, "I think Lord Launceston may rest satisfied; he has done his duty to his country, at least in one way, and I hope he will now condescend to the quieter task of taking care of it at home; to-morrow, I believe, you are to take your seat," added she, to Trevelyan.

Just then John came in to say the carriage was waiting, and Augusta soon after rose to depart. "Do, before you go," said Miss Trevelyan to her brother, "give me a frank;" and she drew him away to a table at the further end of the room for that purpose. When there—"Tell me," she continued in a lowered voice, "for, seeing no one, I hear no news; is it positive that we are going to begin again all the miseries of war? and what do you suppose will happen in consequence of this abominable order of Buonaparte to stop all English travellers? What will become of them?"

"God knows!" said Trevelyan, with embarrassment, the colour rising in his face; but directly recollecting himself, he added, with assumed gaiety, "It is all too long a story to tell now, for I believe the carriage has been here this age, and it is raining hard; but I shall ride down some day soon, to see what you and Doctor Hume are about, and then I will bring you all the news I can collect, since even you, it seems, are grown a politician!"

Augusta took her leave, and left the room; Trevelyan followed her, but, just as he had reached the top of the stairs, he suddenly stopped and hurried back to his sister. "Louisa," said he, in a low agitated voice, "you know nothing of the Leslies, do you? Have you any notion where they are?"

"No, none," she replied. "Indeed, I had hoped you might have given me information respecting them, which was the reason of my inquiring so anxiously about public news; but as you said nothing, I did not like abruptly to name them to you; although," added she, kindly pressing her brother's hand; "I hope all that is now quite

Digitized by Google

gone by." Trevelyan's blood again tinged his cheek, but he said nothing—and she continued, "I have heard nothing whatever of Theresa since last September, when she wrote to me from Venice; it was a very short letter, and she did not even mention where they were going to next; she made many inquiries after you, and said she hoped, when they went to Naples, she might be lucky enough to fall in with you if you were still in the Mediterranean, for she was not then aware of your having returned to England." Trevelyan made no comment on all this, but again warmly pressing his sister's hand in his, hurried down stairs after his wife.

The next day, as we have already mentioned, was that fixed upon for Lord Launceston's introduction into the House of Lords; and accordingly, in compliance with the usual forms on such occasions, attended by two peers of similar rank, he took the solemn oath of allegiance to his sovereign.

Having been nearly all his life engaged in active service abroad, Trevelyan was little known in the world of London, so that, as soon as he appeared, his tall commanding figure and handsome countenance attracted general attention; and the curiosity of his brother peers was immediately roused with regard to their new member. The circumstance of his one arm also, and the Egyptian medal on his breast, increased the general interest which he inspired, for in those days brave deeds in arms had not, as now, added so many heroes to the peerage, and it was not then usual to see the venerable robes of that order covering the wounds and weapons of the soldier.

A particularly interesting debate took place that night, and Trevelyan, to whom the whole scene was new, whose ardent character particularly fitted him for entering with enthusiasm into the weal and woe of his country, and who felt so keenly the want of some strong interest in his existence, readily gave his whole mind to what he that night for the first time saw and heard, welcoming with joy the prospect of occupation to his life and feelings, which his duty as a member of that house seemed now to promise him. The debate turned on some transaction

Digitized by Google

at the termination of the war, which had occurred in the Mediterranean; and encouragd by his next neighbour (who, from his conversation, found he could give the immediate information required,) Trevelyan rose to speak, and in a clear energetic manner, explained the subject then in discussion. A new speaker always meets with encouragement; besides, Lord Launceston's politics not being as yet quite ascertained, both parties vied in testifying most flattering approbation, and when the house broke up several distinguished members, both Whigs and Tories, begged to be made known to him. All this excitement was so different from the dull, heavy life which he had led of late, that Trevelyan's spirits were in a most agreeable manner affected by the contrast, and he felt as if there was still a possibility of interest, at least, for him in this world, if not of happiness.

Just as he was leaving the house, an old Egyptian friend, General Campbell, who had, below the bar, been attending to the debate, made his way up to him, most warmly congratulating him on the brilliant success which had attended his maiden speech, and on his well-deserved hereditary honours. "They really become you," said he; "I declare I could not at first believe my eyes when I saw you get up, though I thought it must be you when I learnt the name of the new speaker; but I should hardly have recognised you, for you are quite another man from what you were when I last saw you lying sick and wounded on the deck of the Undaunted. I was so glad, too, when you, in such a bold decided manner, put them all to rights, they were going on blundering at such a rate;—but how can it be otherwise, when men sitting here at their ease, will fancy they can settle and pass judgment on events which take place at the other end of the world, and which cannot be settled but by hard blows? It is an excellent thing that there should be some members in this house who have, like you, gone through these hard blows, and know a little—that planning is one thing, but doing another. Apropos! talking of settling, I hear you are married, and to your cousin, Lady Augusta, who is, I am told, handsome and excellent, and every thing a brave man's wife should be."

Digitized by Google

And again the old general heartily shook Trevelyan by the hand, renewing his congratulations on all his good fortune; a well-meant compliment, no doubt, but which painfully checked Trevelyan's unusual exhilaration of spirits. "By the by," continued the general, as he and Trevelyan were together walking towards the lobby, "I think you are somehow connected with the Leslie family (my neighbours in Scotland, you know.) Have you heard anything positive about the very unpleasant story, which is, I hear, to-day reported in town, that, according to this shameful edict of that ruffian Buonaparte, Lord Herbert Leslie has been arrested near Nismes, and that in his attempt to escape he was mortally wounded?"

Trevelyan gave a violent start. "What do you say?" he exclaimed, eagerly. "Mortally wounded!—Where?—By whom?"—

"Oh! it is supposed by the gendarmes, who were sent to seize him," continued General Campbell, "and from whom not very wisely he attempted to make his escape. It is altogether a strange confused story; for it is said the Leslies had assumed feigned names, and were travelling under the protection of Madame de Bricqueville, the French general's wife, whom another version of the same story names as eloping with Lord Herbert. In short, I could not very well make it all out; but I fear there must be some foundation for the report."

The agitation which this intelligence produced upon Trevelyan, may be better imagined than described. A thousand painful images presented themselves in a minute to his mind. Theresa in danger—alone—in a foreign land—exposed to every difficulty—to insult—and he unable to defend and assist her! But, perhaps, the first, the last, the strongest, the overwhelming thought—one which would obtrude itself, notwithstanding his conscience severely reproached him for its culpable selfishness, was—that Theresa was perhaps now free—and himself irrevocably bound to another!

Trevelyan busied himself all next day, and the next and the next, in endeavouring to discover the truth, and obtain further particulars of this affair, but in vain. He traced the original story to a young man of respectable con-

Digitized by Google

nexions, who had through all sorts of dangers and disguises at last effected his escape to Havre, and from thence reached England in an open boat. Ascertaining the residence of this gentleman, Trevelyan immediately hurried to him, but he could obtain no further or more positive information. He said he could not vouch for the accuracy of the story, but such was the account brought to Valenciennes by one who had lately been arrested in the south of France, and carried to that depôt of *détenus*. Trevelyan next wrote to Lord Falkirk, but before his letter could have reached Scotland, he received one from the unhappy father, who having also heard the fatal news, applied to Trevelyan for what further intelligence he might have gathered. Thus, therefore, ended for the present all hopes of ascertaining the truth of the report; and the anxiety which this cruel state of doubt naturally occasioned, for a period engrossed Trevelyan's mind, to the exclusion of even that strong interest with which the affairs of his country had of late so happily inspired him.

As time, however, wore on, and nothing more was heard, the fever of his mind naturally abated. That the Leslies were among the *détenus* was very certain, if *he* indeed was still among the living; for several months now passed, and they never appeared, and still no letters from them reached England. The captain of a man-of-war, who had left the Mediterranean in June, said that he had seen Lord and Lady Herbert at Naples just before the breaking out of the war, but where they went to on that event, or what became of them, he could not tell.

Whether Augusta ever observed her husband's addition gloom and abstraction at this period, and if she did, whether she ascertained the cause, is known to herself alone, for she never breathed a word on the subject to him or any one; and Trevelyan, on his part, was of course no less careful to conceal his feelings from her; indeed, it was only when alone with his sister that he ever ventured to name the Leslies—ever even alluded to their existence!

In this state of ignorance, Trevelyan again left town,

Digitized by Google

but soon after his arrival in Cornwall he received the following letter from Lord Falkirk:

"MY DEAR LORD,

"Knowing the interest you take in the fate of my son Herbert, I hasten to inform you, that I have at last, through the means of the Admiralty, obtained news of his safety, and of his being at present among the *détenus* at Verdun. As yet this is all I know, but as private letters occasionally make their way to England, we may hope before long to obtain further intelligence from themselves. Lady Herbert is not particularly named, but as I begged for all possible information respecting them both, we may conclude from this silence that she is certainly with her husband, and we will hope well.

"Of course no exertions on my part shall be wanting to procure their release, but my friend Lord Melville gives me little encouragement for hoping that it can be easily effected, at least at present.

"I am, my dear Lord, yours,

"FALKIRK."

Trevelyan endeavoured to derive from this information the consolation which it seemed intended to give. The certainty of Lord Herbert's being still in existence, was no doubt a relief to his mind, as it quieted many a fear relative to Theresa's welfare, and also laid to rest certain vague painful feelings, which the possibility of her being now free had given rise to.

But still, this account of their present situation was little calculated to end all anxiety respecting her. Her seemingly hopeless unlimited residence in another country—a country with which war had cut off nearly all communication, and where the manners and morals were so peculiarly dangerous to one so inexperienced, so young, so beautiful! All these considerations, naturally changing the nature of his anxiety, rather than relieving it, he remained, if possible, still more uneasy than before.

After another month had elapsed, Trevelyan received a letter from his sister, and on opening it, every pulse in his frame beat, for his eyes fell on the once well-known

Digitized by Google

hand-writing of Theresa! The sight imparted a momentary ray of delight to his heart, for it seemed for an instant as if he was once again actually beholding her!—This letter, which was addressed to Miss Trevelyan, and dated from Verdun, was very short; she merely said that they had been arrested at Nismes, and conveyed from thence to Verdun, where they then were with many more of their countrymen, but that they had some hopes, that through the medium of a friend, and in consideration of Lord Herbert not being a military person, they might before long obtain permission to remove to Paris, which would be every way a more desirable residence for them. She apologised for the shortness of her letter, pleading the danger of entering into any details, and ended by lamenting bitterly the total ignorance in which she lived respecting her dear friends in England.—With this letter ended all news of the Leslies for many months.

In the following winter, Trevelyan became a father. This new and rousing interest could not fail to have full power over one of so affectionate a disposition, and whose heart had so longed for an object on which to dispose of its tenderness. The birth of his son had also the happy effect of exciting him to more active zeal in the discharge of his duties as an extensive proprietor, and member of the great senate of the kingdom; for he now felt that there was one whose weal and woe was deeply involved not only in his own, but in that of his country, and that by his active exertions for the public good he would be at the same time labouring for the future welfare of the new object of his affections. And this renewed energy of mind proved even still more beneficial to Trevelyan himself than to the being who had inspired it, such important avocations preserving him from sinking into a state of gloom and depression, from which perhaps not even the duties of a parent, during the first years at least of his obtaining that endearing title, would have entirely rescued him. For he had a worm ever gnawing at his heart, the consequence as much of the bitter disappointment which had attended his married life, as of the loss of her whom he had adored.

Additional years of habitual intercourse had not tended

Digitized by Google

in any greater degree to assimilate Lady Launceston's dispositions with his own; on the contrary, having from the first pursued their separate solitary paths, they had in their progress in life necessarily wandered farther and farther from each other, until the distance seemed to be widened beyond all hope of recovery. Even their children became an additional cause of separation, instead of acting as sacred links to bind them to each other—for there, as in every thing else, Augusta's dry formal notions of duty, which ever converted pleasures into toils, came in and spoiled all. There was such perpetual lecturing and teaching of the elder boy, such doctoring and coddling of the younger, that Trevelyan was at last sickened of the whole business, and grew to hate the details of a nursery as much as naturally he would have taken interest in them. Augusta was ever the nurse and governess rather than the mother; and as Trevelyan took up his parental duties in a far higher tone, the children gave rise to eternal disputes about trifles, notwithstanding his systematic indulgence of his wife's wishes, and her habitual placidity of temper.

But in Lady Launceston there was united with that placidity another quality, which not unfrequently accompanies it, when proceeding from temperament rather than principle, namely, a most unbending adherence to her own opinion, founded on the comfortable conviction that, as she was always in the right, those who differed from her must necessarily be always in the wrong. This defect in Augusta's character, which gradually developed itself in the progress of their married life, at first provoked her husband's smiles rather than his anger. But marriage is a sort of moral microscope, the test of whose magnifying powers few characters can stand; and although it may sometimes bring to view charms of heart and mind, which the diffidence of youth had hitherto concealed, it oftener, alas, only exhibits in stronger lines the defects inherent in human nature—those defects, which, being at first scarcely visible, no way marred the fair picture that had captivated the eye, but which now, growing stronger and stronger on the sight, too often end in alone arresting the attention.

Digitized by Google

The quiet self-satisfaction, and placid positiveness of Augusta's disposition, acted in a peculiarly unfortunate manner on the more lively feelings of her husband, and, as even in the most hard-fought battle she ever retained her own immoveability of temper, her less phlegmatic opponent appeared in consequence always the one in fault, being irritated into a warmth of expression, which never escaped from her lips. Thus mutually provoking and provoked, they by degrees nearly ceased from all communication on those little circumstances of daily life, which, trifling as they are in themselves, have nevertheless the power so much to destroy or add to its happiness; and, finding in consequence neither comfort, interest, nor sympathy at home, Lord Launceston was driven into scenes of worldly amusement, naturally little congenial either to his taste or feelings. Not that he found in them the happiness he longed for, but, while thus engaged, he at least experienced a temporary forgetfulness of his sorrows, and a degree of occupation to his mind which he felt to be absolutely necessary, in order to prevent it from preying on itself, and from ever recurring to that delightful vision of domestic felicity, in which he had once fondly indulged. And this degree of wholesome excitement, which intercourse with his fellow creatures sometimes produced, was never to be found at his own house; for, even if Augusta did make any attempts towards society, having no ideas on the subject beyond collecting together her relations and connexions, and such relatives happening in their family to consist chiefly of elderly females, her patriarchal congregations of petticoats, far from attracting her husband, wearied him to death, and induced him to seek elsewhere for amusement better suited to one of his mind and to the circumstances in which he was placed.

Many pitied Lady Launceston for being thus neglected by her husband. Many wondered what attractions he found in the world, when his grave face and reserved manner evinced so little interest in any thing around him. Many more wondered why he looked so grave, when every advantage this world could give was his, and had even in a manner been forced upon him. It is thus that the thought-

Digitized by Google

less and uncharitable ever boldly decide on the conduct and trials of others, although in total ignorance of the circumstances which may palliate or aggravate either. Had the secret of Trevelyan's existence been known, who would not have commiserated his sorrows! for he, like many, though he was surrounded by all the gayest trappings of life, carried into the world a mind benumbed by disappointment, and with him such feelings were the harder to bear, as not only was he denied the solace or confidence, but principle forbade his acknowledging them even to himself.

During all this time it was very rarely that news of the Leslies reached England. Miss Trevelyan had occasionally heard from Theresa, but any communication between this country and the Continent was at that time nearly impossible; and when these much wished for letters did arrive they were necessarily so short that they told little beyond her being in existence, and served therefore to keep painfully alive, rather than to allay, Trevelyan's feelings of anxiety respecting her. A still longer period than usual having at length elapsed without even such unsatisfactory intelligence, he wrote to Lord Falkirk, to request he would give him all the information he could; but his answer was so dry and laconic, and he professed such entire ignorance of their proceedings, that Trevelyan was not encouraged to seek for farther information in that quarter, and he in consequence remained in total ignorance respecting the fate of one who still occupied but too prominent a place in his affections.

Digitized by Google

PART III.

CHAPTER I.

—— Can I esteem thee no longer? Oh, pain,
That wrings ev'ry fibre, that thrills ev'ry vein!
Old Song.

One night in the spring of 1808, when the House of Lords had broken up unusually early, Trevelyan, in his way home, accompanied a friend to H——d House. He there found one of those crowded assemblies which seem to give pleasure to no one—to which every one professes a hatred, and yet to which every one flocks. Trevelyan remained for some time in the recess of a window, engaged in interesting political conversation relative to the recent debate, totally unheeding the crowd which buzzed around. His companion being at length called away, he was left alone, but feeling no particular interest to attract him further, he continued at the same spot, his eyes wandering carelessly over the moving mass, hardly conscious whom or what he saw. At last his attention was caught by a group of persons at a little distance, who appeared to be collected round some object of peculiar interest, and for lack of other occupation he for some time watched the party, although unable to discover any particular cause for the seeming general attraction.

As it was now getting late, he was about to leave the room, when suddenly, by the moving of some of those who formed the crowd, he beheld a figure which immediately riveted his attention.

She was dressed in the fashion of revolutionary France, a costume which, from the total separation of the countries during the last five years, had been little seen, or at least was not then generally adopted in England. Her shoulders, of most dazzling beauty, were naked nearly to

Digitized by Google

the waist, and the lines of her graceful figure were scarcely concealed by the statue-like drapery which hung over it, and which appeared to be secured around her merely by the girdle that enclosed her waist. Long dark glossy ringlets hanging down on each side of her cheeks and throat, at the moment, entirely hid her features; but the general contour of her head rivalling the beauty of a Grecian bust, gave full promise of perfection in the averted face.

Trevelyan had beheld all this with mixed feelings of admiration and disgust; but—on a sudden—a strange, mysterious presentiment took possession of his soul—he again gazed at the figure before him breathless with fear, hope, and anxiety.—She at last moved—she turned towards him!—At once every pulse in his frame ceased to beat, and his senses became confused—he wildly looked again. She now on a sudden caught his glance, and her eyes were instantly earnestly riveted upon him!

Those who have been separated by fate from the object of their romantic affections, and have, perhaps, for years dwelt on the dear recollection until it has become a sort of dream of the imagination, will know that when at last that visionary form is suddenly realised before the eyes, it bursts upon the senses with the awfulness of a phantom. Such were Trevelyan's bewildered feelings, when, after a total separation of so many years, he thus unexpectedly again beheld Theresa!

On her part, to recognise him—to fly to his side—to seize his hand with rapture—to pour forth the most vehement expressions of delight, was the affair of a moment. But still Trevelyan continued to stare wildly at her, as if he had lost all power of speech or motion.

Observing how much her abrupt appearance had agitated him, (for Theresa needed no one to assist her in reading the passions of the soul,) she, pressing his hand in her's, said, in a low voice, "Come with me into the next room—it seems nearly empty, and we may there talk more quietly, for this is no place for saying all we both have to ask and to tell;" and putting her arm within his, she led him into the outward apartment.

When there, seated on a couch by her side, his hand

Digitized by Google

still pressed in her's, and once more actually hearing the accents of her beloved voice, Trevelyan in some degree recovered from his emotion. He then ventured again to raise his eyes towards her; indeed, it was now only that he actually saw her, for all before had been confusion.

At five and twenty, Theresa was still more beautiful than at eighteen; her figure, the principal charm of which had before consisted in the slim airiness of youth, was now beautifully rounded into a woman's form; her complexion was still more brilliant, her eyes still more sparkling. But Trevelyan withdraw his from their glance with a sort of mental shudder, for they had in them an expression which turned his very heart sick, although he could not—would not—have described it, they told him of scenes to which they had probably been witness, and which appeared to have left upon them a stamp of their lawlessness!

"And is it really you, Colonel Trevelyan?" said Theresa, looking at him with most unfeigned pleasure; "I can hardly believe it is not all a dream! for you can form no idea of the happiness of this meeting to me—to me who have been so long an exile, and who have lived in such total ignorance of the existence even of every creature I loved, that I positively did not dare make inquiries after any one. Judge therefore of my delight on seeing *you* so unexpectedly! But I have so much to learn, I hardly know where to begin. First, however, tell me, may I venture to ask after dear, dear Treevy?" and Theresa looked with painful anxiety in her companion's face for his reply.

"My sister still lives," said Trevelyan, who had now at last recovered the power of utterance;" "but well, I cannot say she is."

"And do you still live with her?—at Richmond?" inquired Theresa.

"No," replied Trevelyan, with embarrassment—"I live—I—am married!"

"Married! good Heavens! tell me quickly to whom," said Theresa, with increased eagerness. Trevelyan, with some hesitation of manner, named Augusta.

"To Augusta! to your cousin the Lady Augusta?"

Digitized by Google

It was evident that Theresa's first impulse had been to express surprise and disappointment, but, suddenly checking herself, "We did not somehow agree very well formerly, you know," said she; "but now she is your wife, I am sure you have taught her to be every thing that is charming.—Excellent, she always was; indeed, too excellent for me, which was, I fear, the true secret of our not suiting; and if that were the bar to our friendship before, what will it be now?"—added she, with a something between a smile and a sigh. "But I will be as hypocritical as I can, in order to win her regard, for your wife I *must* love, and your wife I am determined *shall* love me;" and as she uttered these words, she looked at him with an expression which, had he ever seen it in Augusta's countenance, he would have hailed as the promise of every future happiness.

Theresa continued thus for some time, pursuing her eager inquiries, while Trevelyan, on his part, could not summon courage to ascertain by what miracle she now appeared before him; whence she came, with whom she was now in England, or had spent the last years of her life. For he felt, as he looked at her, and was again startled by the indelicacy of her dress and the free glance of her eye, that she had much to tell—too much perhaps—and he wished as long as possible to indulge in the delirium of happiness which, founded on ignorance of all that had befallen her since they had parted, and still more on the temporary forgetfulness of all that had befallen himself, had taken possession of his senses.

It was now very late, and, for some time during the latter part of this *tête-à-tête* conversation, figures had been gliding through the room wrapped in shawls and cloaks, until the greatest part of the company was gone; but Theresa, totally engrossed by her companion, seemed to have no thoughts of moving, and Trevelyan could not bring himself to dissolve the delightful dream by adverting to the hour, or making the slightest motion towards leaving her—still Lord Herbert was never named by Theresa, and still Trevelyan had not resolution to make any inquiries concerning him.

At length a person looking hastily in at the door,

Digitized by Google

which led from the next apartment, in apparent search of some one, exclaimed, "Oh! there you are!" and a very good-looking young man coming up to Theresa, said, in rather a tone of reproach, "I have been looking for you everywhere for this last hour, and could not conceive what was become of you; Mrs. Lindsay bids me say she wishes to go home;—that is to say, if you can tear yourself away," he added, with a supercilious smile, and then, examining Trevelyan with no very satisfied looks, his eyes appeared to take Theresa to task, for being thus occupied with another.

"What! is it already so late?" said she, with a sigh; "what a pity! fetch me my cloak, Lascelles, and I will come directly." Then as her unknown friend left the room, turning again to Trevelyan, she said in a low voice: "You must come to me to-morrow morning, I have still so much to say, and to ask." Trevelyan, who had neither time nor inclination to refuse the appointment, inquired where, and at what hour, he was to call on her. "There is my direction," said she, taking a card of address out of her bag," and come as early as you like, at twelve—at any hour in short, I shall be too happy to see *you*."

Her handsome young friend then returned with her cloak, and, as he assisted her in putting it on, "What in the world," said he, "is Leslie doing with himself, I have not set eyes on him to-day."

"A pretty question to ask me," replied Theresa, "I, who have not seen him since our arrival; however, so far as I can give you information, that I believe he is gone with some friend, whom he unexpectedly fell in with, to Ascot races; but really I am not sure, and I should have thought you would have known better by this time than to apply to me for news of my husband."

Her friend laughed, and whispered something to Theresa, who also laughed, then holding out her hand to Trevelyan, with the sweetest expression possible, "*à demain*," she said in a low voice, "remember twelve," and left the room arm-and-arm with her companion.

How much had Trevelyan learnt by those few words which he had overheard. They told him that Theresa

Digitized by Google

was still a wife, which, from her strange silence respecting Lord Herbert, he had almost begun to doubt; they told him that *that* love for which he had sacrificed his own existence was gone!—and all he heard and saw *would* tell him (although his blood curdled at the obtruding suspicion) that Theresa was no longer the pure, spotless being she once had been. Trevelyan remained for several minutes fixed to the spot where she had left him, engrossed by the most painful thoughts; at length, roused by the entrance of a servant, who came in to extinguish the lights, every one else being gone, he hastily rose from his seat and left the house.

When in the open air, and when familiar objects met his eyes in his way home, all that had passed within the last two hours reassumed the semblance of a dream! Was it possible that he was again in a manner united to Theresa? that again next day he should see her—again hear the sounds of her voice—of that bewitching voice whose tones had still the freshness of innocence! Oh! if he could but have been deceived by his anxiety—if he might but be allowed still to give way to that confiding affection which had once made his happiness!—for he felt as if every other trial would then be light in comparison.

A night of feverish agitation followed the events of that evening. Trevelyan's passions were all in wild disorder—his conscience too, confusedly reproaching him for the existence of feelings which, far from attempting to control, he had not yet had courage to investigate. The next morning he (almost unconsciously to himself) delayed as long as possible encountering his wife at breakfast, for he felt as if she must read the secret of his soul in the very first glance of his countenance. The instant he appeared at the drawing-room door, his little boy ran up to him; "Oh, here's papa! dear, good papa!" and he presented his rosy face for the accustomed kiss. Trevelyan took up the child in his arms, as a sort of skreen between him and Augusta. "Oh! but, papa, I fear you have not been good—your face looks all I don't know how, as Freddy's does when he won't say his letters. Has mamma been scolding you?—have you been crying?

Digitized by Google

Oh, naughty papa!" and the child playfully held up his finger at Trevelyan.

"Papa has a bad headache," said Trevelyan, in order to turn off the child's observation on his disordered looks into another channel, fearful that his remarks might attract those of his wife.

"A headache! Poor dear papa! I will kiss it and make it well," and the child began caressing him most fondly.

"I suppose the House sat very late last night?" said Augusta, without ever raising her eyes towards her husband; "for I think it must have been near three when you came home. Was there any thing particular?"

"No, nothing," said Trevelyan, conscious that he coloured as he spoke; and he seated himself at the breakfast table, little St. Ives on his knee, who readily swallowed the food which Trevelyan, unable to eat himself, poured down the child's throat to avoid detection.

"St. Ives! St. Ives!" said Augusta angrily, "don't you know I have forbidden you to eat eggs? Lord Launceston, I do wish you would not feed the child at this time, you will ruin his stomach: there is nothing so bad for children's digestion as being fed at irregular hours?"

Little St. Ives, with a start and blush of alarm, laid down the piece of well yellowed toast he was just putting into his mouth; and the rest of his breakfast remained uneaten on Trevelyan's plate.

"I was wishing to speak to you about the children's health," continued Augusta: "Freddy is, I am sure, not well; and Dr. Nicholson says he cannot be well as long as he stays in London; and he quite agrees with me that it is impossible for children to exist in town. Why, only consider how far they have to walk before they can get any thing like fresh air! they are quite knocked up before they get to the Park; and if I send them in the carriage, they are so hurried; for you know Freddy is not awake till twelve—indeed, sometimes not till full a quarter after! and then there is the servants' dinner at one—and it never answers breaking into regular family hours; so you see it is all quite impossible to arrange; and the fact is, if you must and will stay in town as long as Par-

Digitized by Google

liament sits, you should, in justice to the children, get some place near, to which we could send them, out of the horrid smoke of London, for it is really killing them by inches keeping them shut up in a close street half the summer. Dr. Nicholson entirely agrees with me, and, in short, says they *must* go out of town without delay. He told me the other day of a very airy house which is now to be had at Cheshunt, with a good garden, and not above twelve miles from town; and that would be the very thing. I wish you would ride down and look at it?"

"I cannot to-day," said Trevelyan, hoping thus to get rid of the matter.

"Well, but will you to-morrow," continued Augusta, who never gave up any point on which she had once insisted. "Dr. Nicholson agrees with me there is not a moment to be lost on account of the children; besides, the place may be gone. Freddy has not a proper appetite certainly, and does not get as strong on his legs as he should. Dr. Nicholson seems to think he may possibly have worms; and indeed he says he should not be surprised if Louisa showed a tendency to determination of blood to the head, though she looks so well, for one cannot always judge by complexion."

And thus Augusta went on in a most wearisome manner, discussing minutely the symptoms and possible causes of these possible complaints in her children. Trevelyan the while making no comment, for in truth his thoughts were far away both from his children's heads and stomachs. Augusta, taking his silence for doubt of her assertions, continued, "I see you don't believe me, but only speak to Dr. Nicholson yourself; he will tell you precisely the same story, and, luckily, I expect him every minute." And to Trevelyan's dismay the Doctor's well-known chariot at that instant driving to the door, he was doomed to hear a repetition of the whole story of worms, digestion, fulness of the vessels, bad air, and the absolute necessity of regular hours, diet, and exercise for children.

Trevelyan listened to all this, and to Augusta's long comments on the Doctor's opinions, with as much patience as he could command; and being in no humour

Digitized by Google

to dispute the matter, Augusta and the Doctor easily carried their point. It was accordingly settled that the house at Cheshunt should be inquired after without delay; and Trevelyan, glad to have thus got rid of the subject, the minute he could extricate himself from these medical discussions repaired to his own room. More than once, during breakfast, he had resolved on mentioning his meeting with Theresa, but was each time restrained by vague apprehensions with regard to the manner in which Augusta might receive the intelligence, and still more by those he could not help entertaining respecting Theresa herself. He, besides, persuaded himself that any disclosure on the subject had been rendered impossible by Lady Launceston's long medical disquisitions, and that it was too late to commence the subject now, when it wanted but half an hour of the time at which Theresa had appointed him. Thus silencing any qualms of conscience which might force themselves upon him, Trevelyan passed that half hour restlessly, pacing up and down his apartment; and the instant the clock struck twelve, darting out of the house, he hurried to Mivart's hotel.

On his arrival, he was shown up two pair of stairs, where he was accosted by a very smart little Frenchwoman, who smiling and curtseying, said she would conduct him to "miladi," and opening a door at the further end of the passage, she at once announced.

"Lord Launceston!" he heard Theresa exclaim; "Mon dieu, Marianne! à quoi donc pensez vous de le conduire ici!" and observing it was a bed-room, Trevelyan was hastily retreating, when Theresa, who now caught a glimpse of his figure, called out, "Oh! is it you? then it is all right, come in; I had quite forgotten your new appellation, and really thought your much-respected aristocratic uncle was doing me the honour of a visit. But I hate this new title of your's, so you must really condescend to be always Colonel Trevelyan to me, for that name is associated in my mind with too much kindness, too much happiness, for me ever to consent to address you by any other."

The momentary alarm occasioned by her mistake had brought the most beautiful colour into Theresa's

Digitized by Google

cheeks; and as she said these last words, and took Trevelyan's hand, a look of such bewitching sweetness softened her eyes, superceding that free glance so revolting to his feelings, that again his confidence in her unaltered character revived.

"Come, sit down," continued Theresa, "here is a *fauteuil* for you.—By the bye, I dare say you are shocked at my receiving you in my bed-room; and I am now so used to that foreign custom—habit, you know, being a second nature—that it never once occurred to me even to apologise to you for treating you so *sans cérémonie;* and I desired Marianne to bring you up here, as I thought we should be so much more quiet, and less exposed to tiresome interruptions."

Theresa was dressed in a loose wrapping-gown, her glossy black ringlets were concealed beneath a quantity of lace, which, hanging over her face, gave to it a peculiar look of delicacy and softness. A French novel lay open on the table before her, which was covered with flowers, perfumes, books, and jewels, all in strange confusion.

The maid, after having been told to let no one in, with a sort of arch smile, and bow of *agacerie* to Trevelyan, departed, and a pause of a minute ensued; for when thus left *tête-à-tête*, the past circumstances of their intercourse seemed to come back awkwardly to them both, and neither appeared very well to know with what subject first to break the silence.

At length Trevelyan overcoming his emotion, and without looking at Theresa said, "Is Lord Herbert at home?"

"Oh, no! I believe not," she replied carelessly; "I do not think he has ever returned from Ascott; but I really know nothing about his movements since our arrival the night before last;" then laughing, she added, "probably, you, with your English domestic notions, may be as mush shocked at this total ignorance of mine concerning my husband's proceedings, as at my receiving you in my bed-room; but here again habit has become nature—one gets used to every thing," said she with a sigh, and a tear starting into her eye.

Digitized by Google

"A strange report reached England about five years ago," continued Trevelyan, with his eyes still averted from Theresa, "that Lord Herbert had been killed at Nismes, when endeavouring to make his escape from those who arrested him."

"Yes—since my arrival in England, I have heard that the world was so good as to convert me into a widow," replied Theresa; "but it was not quite so bad as that—the real truth of the story was, that being at Naples when war again broke out, we daudled on there much too long, as Herbert could not bring himself to leave his *chère amie*, Madame de Bricqueville, who persuaded him that under her protection he had nothing to fear—at last quarrelling with her *quondam sposo*, on account of *his chère amie*, Madame de Bricqueville determined on leaving Naples in search of better fortune elsewhere, and it was settled that we should travel homewards under her escort, Lord Herbert and myself passing for a French gentleman and lady, friends of Madame de Bricqueville: perhaps you will again wonder at this sociable arrangement," continued Theresa, "and I can't say I liked it much myself at the time, but I soon found *qu'il faut hurler avec les loups*, and so on we proceeded most lovingly and without molestation till we reached Nismes. Unfortunately, the commandant of that place had seen us before, and as bad luck would have it, owing General Bricqueville a grudge on account of some military appointment of which he thought he had deprived him, he in revenge (concluding the General privy to our escape) immediately arrested us. Madame de Bricqueville interposed—but the commandant using some strong language with regard to the fair mediator, Herbert of course, *en preux chevalier*, resented the insult. A scuffle ensued, in which he was slightly wounded—however, it proved to be nothing, only rendering him for a time the more interesting in the eyes of Madame de Bricqueville. All this story was reported at head-quarters by the commandant, and we were in consequence regularly detained. In due course of time, Madame de Bricqueville deserted her *cavalier sirvente*, and soon after we were removed to Verdun. That was a detestable place, as it contained

Digitized by Google

every possible temptation to evil, without possessing one redeeming attraction (in my eyes at least;)—and as I also had contrived to make friends among those then in power," continued Theresa, with an arch smile, "I managed to turn my influence to better account than Herbert had his, and we were in consequence, through the interest and exertions of General St. Clair, allowed to remove to Paris, where we have remained ever since."

Theresa paused, as if uncertain whether to proceed with her narrative; but after a minute of apparent recollection, she continued. "No residence could be every way more agreeable than Paris—at least while money lasted, and, by some means or other, Herbert contrived to keep matters going:—whether the life we led, and the society in which we lived, were exactly such as dear Treevy would have approved of, I am not so sure;—but it was full of pleasures of some sort; and Herbert and I, each in our different ways, partook of them most freely. During all this time, I heard nothing from you or Treevy. I suspect few of the letters written on either side ever reached their destination; and it is difficult to continue writing when in a state of such total ignorance as that in which we then were respecting all our friends in England. Month after month therefore passed without my having courage to make any attempt towards the renewal of an intercourse which I sometimes fancied you wished should die away;—perhaps, also," continued Theresa, mournfully, "I felt I had no good to say of myself, and that we had better both of us be forgotten."

Theresa again suddenly stopped, drawing a long breath, as if to suppress a nervous sob that was rising to her throat, but soon overcoming the feeling which had appeared to occasion it, she proceeded.

"Herbert's good fortune at last forsook him; all remittances from his father had long since ceased, and growing desperate, he eagerly caught at Lascelles' offers to assist him in effecting our escape. But I forget,—you don't know about Lascelles. He was, with ourselves among the *détenus* at Verdun, and had also obtained leave to remove to Paris. For some time he continued to advance money to Herbert, but, as his means were also

Digitized by Google

beginning to fail, that compact could not continue; and at length both becoming weary of so uncertain an existence, they turned all their thoughts towards England. In what manner our escape was effected, I am not at liberty to tell—nor will I tell you upon what conditions Lascelles agreed to our sharing his fortunes."

Theresa was silent,—a crimson blush suffused her face, and she fixed her eyes on the ground; while Trevelyan, trembling in every limb, looked at her aghast.

"I see what is passing in your mind," said she, after a minute, and with a wild quickness of manner. "I read your suspicions—but, thank Heaven! I can still look *you*—still look the world in the face. Although slighted—scorned—although my doating affection has been repaid by neglect, I loved him,—I loved *myself* too well to resent my injuries as I might have done;—ay, and fool that I am, to you I will acknowledge that I *still* love Herbert too well to ——."

Here Theresa's voice became quite choked with her emotion, and after one or two vain attempts at repressing her feelings, she burst into an agony of tears.

Trevelyan, shocked beyond the power of words, sat motionless. In a minute, however, Theresa to a degree recovered herself. "You know," she continued, with the tone and manner of violent excitement, "you know how devoted my heart was to him. Heaven knows how devoted it would ever have continued—I had lavished on him every faculty of my soul—I loved him with an enthusiasm that made me see nothing in the world but him! It was a short delirium of happiness dearly purchased by years of pain and disappointment. It was long before I *would*—before I *could* open my eyes to the truth;—when at last it forced itself upon me—when I at last saw the deception of which I had been the dupe—or, perhaps, rather which I had practised on myself—when I saw, past all possibility of doubt, the misery of my situation."——Theresa's voice again faltered, and as if too much overpowered by her feelings to proceed, she abruptly rose from her seat, and hurrying to the window, threw up the sash, eagerly welcoming the fresh air which blew on her agitated face.

Digitized by Google

After remaining thus a minute, she turned towards Trevelyan, and with a smile said, "Don't let me alarm you—the fit will soon be over; such *accès* do not visit me often now—indeed, I had flattered myself I was quite hardened to it all; but seeing you again, and the recollections which the sight of you has revived, are all too much—and have quite overpowered me:" then covering her face, she sobbed aloud.

Trevelyan could endure it no longer—he darted towards her—he seized her hand—he called her by the most endearing names—he faltered out the kindest words of comfort.

Just then, a knock was heard at the door, and Marianne, without allowing time for an admitting reply, appeared. Theresa made sign to Trevelyan not to leave her; and composing herself with a quickness that was quite astonishing to him, she demanded of Marianne what she wanted.

"Monsieur est ici," said she, "et demande s'il ne peut pas être admis."

"Ah! dites lui que je ne peux pas le voir dans le moment," replied Theresa, in an hesitating tone.

"Je le lui ai dejà dit, et que Miladi est très *particuliérement* occupée," said the soubrette, with a sly glance at Trevelyan. "Mais, Monsieur veut savoir ce qui l'occupe, car il est venu tout exprès pour se devouer au service de Miladi."

"Dites lui," said Theresa, assuming a calm look and manner, as if the presence of Trevelyan had inspired her with the dignity and boldnes of rectitude. "Dites à Mr. Lascelles, de ma part, que je le prie de revenir dans deux heures, que la voiture est ordonnée, et que j'espére qu'il m'accompagnera chez Madame Lindsay. Mais que dans le moment un ami que je n'ai vu de six ans, un ami de ma jeunesse est ici, et que nous parlons d'affaires."

"Ah! il est question d'affaires avec un ami de la jeunesse!" repeated Marianne, as with a look of pert incredulity she again stared impudently at Trevelyan. "Je ne me doubtais pas de cela; bien, je dirai tout à monsieur, et il faut bien qu'il soit content."

"Attends, attends," said Theresa, and hastily writing

Digitized by Google

a few words with her pencil on a scrap of paper, "La," said she, "donne lui cela; et ce que j'ai écris suffira."

As Marianne pertly spun out of the room with her dispatch, she muttered to herself, although loud enough for both Trevelyan and her mistress to hear her, "Ma foi! ce serait bien mieux de lui dire tout bonnement que qui va à la chasse, perd sa place."

"Petite impertinente, tais toi," said Theresa, sharply, although evidently amused rather than indignant at her excessive insolence.

"The truth is," added she, turning to Trevelyan, in whose countenance she plainly read surprise and displeasure; "Marianne is, I suspect, just now in high favour with Lord Herbert, which is the real secret of her impertinence to me."

This intrusion of Marianne's and the nature of her errand, were, perhaps, on the whole, fortunate circumstances at that moment, as the lawless levity of all he saw and heard, awakened Trevelyan from a dream of tenderness and pity, which had for the time made him forget everything but Theresa, and Theresa unhappy! He had gradually retired to a distance from her, and resumed his former seat, while she remained at the window, her head leaning on her hand.

"Lady Herbert," he at length said, "may I speak to you as a friend? Will you let me still exercise my former office of guardian?"

"Most willingly, most gratefully!" exclaimed Theresa with fervour; "but on one condition, that you still call me Theresa, as in days of yore; unless, indeed, you think (as I suspect you do) that I have forfeited all right to such endearments of friendship."

"Who?" continued Trevelyan, in a grave firm voice, and no way noticing what she had just said, "who is this Mr Lascelles? What are his rights over your time —your actions? How come you to be living on terms of such extraordinary intimacy with him—and *what* are the *conditions* to which you alluded?" he added, in a lower voice.

Theresa coloured. "Really," said she gaily, "vous abusez un peu du privilege de tuteur. You cannot ex-

Digitized by Google

pect I will tell you *all* my secrets at once; and surely I have told enough for one day—far too much," added she, after a moment's pause, and in an altered tone; "I have told you a tale, which you little could have thought, when we parted on my wedding-day, ever to have heard from me."—And again big tears rolled down her flushed cheeks. "It is strange how low and nervous I am this morning," she continued. "I don't know what has come over me," and leaving her seat at the window, she for some time walked up and down the room, endeavouring to compose herself.

At last she went up to Trevelyan. "I will finish my confessions to you another time," said she, "but I cannot now—for I am somehow a fool to-day—tired and not well, I suppose.—So let us talk about yourself—about dear Treevy; I do so long to see her! when can I go to her?"

"That is just what I was going to ask you," said Trevelyan, for he too longed that Theresa should find a refuge for her wild undisciplined feelings in the edifying influence of his sister's society.

"To-morrow?" said Theresa.

"Yes, the sooner the better," replied Trevelyan, eagerly; and then as if some thought had on a sudden changed his first impulse, he added, after a minute, "I will see if Lady Launceston will like to go with us to-morrow."

"Lady Launceston!" exclaimed Theresa, "oh no, for Heaven's sake, do not propose to her to be *en tiers* with us. I have not *made myself up* for her yet," said she, laughing, "for I must not venture to present myself before the all-perfect Lady Augusta with all my blushing imperfections on my head—and surely, even your stiff English propriety cannot think there would be any harm in you and me driving down together to Richmond to see your sister!"

Trevelyan did not reply immediately, for in truth he knew not what to say—he more than agreed with Theresa, in thinking that Augusta would be in every way *déplacée*, and very much *de trop* in such an expedition; but, perhaps, it was for that very reason—it was because he already looked with delight to those hours which he

Digitized by Google

was to spend with Theresa, *tête-à-tête*, that he felt it was absolutely necessary at once to put an end to the present mystery about her. He was fully aware that his former system of concealment could not—indeed, *ought* not—now to continue; for instinct told him that Augusta, calm and passionless as she appeared, might be capable of the most suspicious jealousy.

"Well, then," said he, after a pause of a minute or two, "will you call on Lady Launceston to-day?"

"Why—yes—perhaps I will," said Theresa. "But should she not first call on me?"

Trevelyan's face crimsoned up to his forehead. "She does not yet know of your arrival," said he, in a low voice, and with much embarrassment.

There was again a pause. Theresa fixed her eyes for an instant on Trevelyan, and then said, "Well, I suppose if I go late this afternoon, I may be sure Lady Launceston will be out, and I can leave my card as a first introduction; for to tell you the truth, I rather dread encountering her alone. Conscience makes cowards of us all, you know; and yet," added she, after a minute's reflection, "perhaps, on the whole, it will be better that our first meeting should be without you."—For that heightened colour in Trevelyan's face had already let Theresa into the secret of his married life: a secret which appeared to be at once not only fully comprehended by her, but to excite no surprise.

Trevelyan rose to depart. "At what time to-morrow shall we go?" said Theresa: "will one suit you?"

"Yes," he replied in rather an uncertain voice.

"Well, then, I shall expect you here at one, and I will have the barouche ready to take us to Richmond."

So saying, she held out her hand to Trevelyan. "Good bye, then, for to day, I suppose," continued she with a mournful smile, "and thanks for all your kindness, even for your lectures. I assure you, they have done me good—and, alas! I require much good to be done to me—in every way, I fear."

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER II.

Youth! brilliant thing, that, like the summer fly,
Hast but a day to wanton in, and die;
Unlike, (though stale the simile,) in this,
The day may lack the sunshine gilding his,
May flit as rapidly, yet ere it close
Feel somewhat of the burthen years impose;
For me thou madest double haste away,
And little of enjoyment mark'd thy stay!—*Old Song.*

TREVELYAN was engaged to a political dinner the evening of that day on which he had visited Theresa, and as he afterwards went to the House of Lords, where he was kept unusually late, he and Lady Launceston did not meet till the following morning at breakfast. Again on appearing he was greeted by the joyful caresses of his children, and again Augusta returned to the subject of the villa in Hertfordshire.

"I have been thinking," said she, "as you are somehow always so busy, that I might as well myself drive down and look at this house Dr. Nicholson recommends, and so give the children a run in the country; I can take Griffiths with me to see whether it is in good repair, and that the offices are convenient; and with regard to the place itself, I dare say I shall be just as good a judge of what will suit us as you can be; indeed better, for you never will take the trouble to look into little details; and what, in this case, I must say does surprise me, you don't seem to care a bit about the matter!"

Trevelyan certainly in his own mind could but plead guilty to the truth of this latter accusation, the whole affair of the house in the country, and the unwholesomeness of London for children having gone entirely out of his head. So that, on Augusta's recurring to the subject, he was not a little discomposed, as his first thought was, that this, his totally forgotten promise, would interfere most disagreeably with his appointment with Theresa;

Digitized by Google

for he well knew his wife's persevering adhesion to any thing which she had once undertaken, and therefore did not very well see how to get rid of the engagement he had inadvertently made with her. His satisfaction at this proposal of her's was therefore proportionably great; and in a most approving tone he commended her excellent arrangement, and advised her by all means to drive down to Cheshunt without delay. Then, after a moment's thought, he added, "You may leave St. Ives under my charge, for if you go into Hertfordshire, (and I quite agree that you will settle the business about the house ten times better than I should,) I think—I shall—go to see my sister—and—I will take him with me."

Augusta made all sorts of objections—that she was sure he would keep him out too late, that he would let him eat too much fruit, or get his feet wet, or catch cold falling asleep coming home. But Trevelyan having given way to his wife's wishes in one point, now kept steadily to his own in this, so that she was at last, (for a wonder,) obliged to yield.

As it was a long drive to Cheshunt and back, post-horses were ordered for the landau at twelve, at which hour Lady Launceston, the two younger children, nurses, and Griffiths, were to set out on their expedition. "And then," said Augusta, (who had a peculiar propensity for all the details of arrangement,) "you can take what carriage you please to Richmond, only remember I shall want a pair of horses to-night, for I am to chaperon Miss Penrhyn to the ball at D—— House, you know; to which, of course, I suppose you mean also to go?"

Trevelyan made no reply, for just then a servant entering, placed before Augusta the visiting cards which had been left the evening before, and as his eyes rapidly glanced over them, his attention was immediately arrested by discovering Theresa's, which was lying at the bottom of the parcel. His heart beat quick, and again making use of his boy as a sort of defence from his wife's observation, he took little St. Ives on his knee, and occupied himself in twisting the curls of his hair round his fingers while Augusta was looking over her numerous visiters.

"Lady Herbert Leslie, Mivart's Hotel! Who in

Digitized by Google

the world can that be?" said she, examining Theresa's card.

Trevelyan pretended not to hear her, and continued playing with the child's ringlets. Whether Augusta observed the agitation but too visible on his countenance, and if she did, what private comments she may have made thereon, is not known; but after a minute she with a peculiar dryness of tone and manner said, "Is that the person whom I met with formerly as Miss Howard?"

"Yes," replied Trevelyan, thinking himself now called upon to make some answer, and commanding his voice as well as he could; "Miss Howard, you know, married your brother's friend, Lord Herbert Leslie."

Augusta did not immediately reply, but after a minute resumed, in the same cold repulsive tone; "I thought they were abroad, and that no one knew any thing of them?"

"They are only just returned to England," said Trevelyan; "I do not believe they have been in London above a couple of days."

"Have you seen Lord Herbert?" inquired Augusta; "for as I do not see his card I suppose you were at home when *he* called?"

"No, I have not seen him yet, only Lady Herbert," replied Trevelyan; "and indeed it was by mere chance that I knew they were arrived." Then, after a moment's pause, he added, "Lady Herbert will, I dare say, be very glad if you call upon her; for she is, of course, a total stranger in London, and any civility will therefore be a real kindness."

Augusta made no reply; and there was a something so little encouraging in her looks, that Trevelyan had not resolution to proceed to inform her that he was that very day going to accompany the apparently obnoxious Theresa to Richmond.

A silence therefore ensued, which it became every moment more difficult to break; and which was at last only terminated by the entrance of Griffiths, to whom Augusta had some orders to give. She therefore immediately left the room to speak to him, and thus ended the conversation on the subject of Lady Herbert Leslie.

Digitized by Google

As soon as Lady Launceston was fairly off for Cheshunt, Trevelyan bent his steps towards Brook street, little St. Ives capering at his side in an ecstasy of delight at the prospect of passing the day with papa and Aunt Treevy. On reaching Mivart's Hotel, he was again led up two pair of stairs, and again ushered into Theresa's bed-room. She was now ready dressed to receive him; every trace of tears and sorrow had disappeared from her face, which shone forth in all its dazzling loveliness. As he entered with his boy, her attention was directly attracted towards him, and she eagerly inquired whose child he was.

"Mine," said Trevelyan.

"Your's! why you never told me you had a child!" and running up to little St. Ives, she caught him in her arms, and placing him on the table before her, began caressing him most fondly.

"Dear boy!" said Theresa, after gazing on him for a minute or two, "how like he is to you! Come, you little monkey, don't be afraid of me, but put your arms round my neck and kiss me and love me;" and so saying she clasped his little hands round her beautiful throat.

The sight of these kind caresses lavished on his child, revived too many contending feelings in Trevelyan's bosom for him to trust himself to witness them, and he hastily walked towards the window. "Will you allow him to be of our party to Richmond to-day?" said he, after a a moment's pause; "for Lady Launceston is gone out of town, and he is left in my charge?"

"Most willingly; I am sure I shall be too happy to have his dear little company. Really, Colonel Trevelyan," continued she, again kissing St. Ives' round fresh cheeks, I envy you this child to love. It would have been much better for me, I dare say, if I had had children to occupy me, and make me steady; that is to say, tiresome, and twaddling, as all fond mothers are, and then I suppose I should have been thought a pattern of every virtue. By the bye, I do suspect," added she laughing, "that, after all, this is a *ruse* of propriety of your's, and that this little *personage* is brought *en tiers* to act the part of chaperon, for I verily believe you are afraid of

Digitized by Google

being seen alone with me:" and again Theresa laughed heartily at Trevelyan's supposed scruples. "Well, as you like, for I am sure, I can have no objection to *his* company, and we shall soon be friends—shall we not, little man?"

"I friends with all pretty ladies," said St. Ives.

"Quite right," said Theresa, again laughing; "there's a wise little boy."

Theresa's carriage was now announced. "Oh! how I like this expedition," she exclaimed with energy; "come, quick—Marianne, give me my cloak and sac;" and then taking Trevelyan's arm, and holding little St. Ives by the other hand, she lightly bounded down the stairs, and the trio set off for Richmond.

When thus leaving London, Augusta, and all his cares behind him, Trevelyan, at Theresa's side, and on a delicious day in June, flew through the perfumed air, it seemed to him as if he had suddenly been transported into another world, and was surrounded by the delights of Paradise itself. No one of any feeling can be insensible to the fresh charms of the country, after a long confinement in town; for the sight of Nature in all the gaudy gaiety of spring, seems to renovate the very heart and spirits by greeting us on every side with sights and sounds of enjoyment. And if such are the effects produced on the calmest minds by the exhilarating scene, what feelings must it have excited in Trevelyan's on that delightful day, when she then at his side, and who was in such lovely unison with all around, was the being who had for so long been the key-stone of his existence! The cheerless blank of which he had hitherto been so painfully sensible, amid all the pursuits and pleasures of life, seemed now on a sudden filled up; and in the delirium of the moment, recklessly giving way to a temporary forgetfulness of the double bar of separation which fate had raised between him and his fascinating companion, he boldly repelled those whispers of conscience which would have warned him that what was so delightful could not possibly be safe.

Theresa was in the gayest spirits—all her sorrows, all her injuries seemed to be forgotten; and as she played

Digitized by Google

and talked the wildest nonsense with his child, Trevelyan almost doubted whether the scene and the tears to which he had been witness but a few hours before, and which had left so painful an impression on his mind, were not all a dream—so little did they appear in connexion with the light-hearted gaiety of his seeming thoughtless companion.

As they drew near Richmond, however, this gaiety gradually subsided. Théresa became nearly silent, and on entering the town she shrank back into the corner of the carriage, as if fearful of encountering objects which necessarily brought so much to her recollection. Trevelyan, who could but too well comprehend the cause of her abstraction, spoke not either, and little St. Ives alone, and unheeded, prattled on, descanting on all he saw. They thus arrived at the door of Miss Trevelyan's house. Trevelyan alighted first, and as he took Theresa's hand to help her out, he felt it tremble in his. The remembrance of the last time when, standing on that very spot, he had pressed that dear hand in his, on finally consigning her to the love and care of another, rushed forcibly on his mind, and seemed to revive all the struggles of that agonizing moment. Theresa's agitation increased so much on leaving the carriage, that he directly drew her arm within his, and hurried her into the house.

"You must prepare yourself to find my sister much changed," said he, in a low voice, as they ascended the stairs which led to the little drawing-room; "I fear she is not long for this world."

Miss Trevelyan had been apprised of their coming; for fearful of the effects of any agitation on her fast sinking frame, Trevelyan had written to her the evening before, to inform her of Theresa's unexpected return to England, and of their probable visit to her the next day.

On entering they found the poor invalid lying on a couch, which was placed close to the open window of her little verandah, the creepers which clustered over it hanging nearly into the room; she had surrounded herself with vases of fresh flowers, as if to give to her apartment *un air de fête*, and had evidently also taken unusual

Digitized by Google

pains with her dress, although little was visible of her person, a large shawl covering her shoulders, and another being thrown over her feet. The instant they reached the door, Theresa flew forward, and the next was locked in her friend's arms, sobbing like a child.

This meeting was just then too much for Trevelyan's nerves to stand, and catching hold of little St. Ives, he hastily descended with him into the garden.

It was some time before either Miss Trevelyan or Theresa had sufficiently recovered from their emotion to speak: the latter gazing with tearful eyes on the pale emaciated countenance of her friend. "I dare say you find me much changed, Theresa," she at length said; "six years will tell upon us all,—though I cannot say they have on you, my love," (for Miss Trevelyan's eyes were fixed in admiration on Theresa's dazzling beauty), "and I trust that in spite of your long residence abroad, you are restored to us pure and fresh in mind as in person. You know I was old-fashioned and narrow-minded enough not to approve of your foreign expedition, when it was only to have been for two years, as I thought it at best but a dangerous experiment; so judge what my anxious fears for you have been;—but I really think my evil bodings have not been fulfilled, and that you are returned to us the same Theresa you ever were."

Theresa averted her face. "I was never worthy of your kindness," said she; "you always thought too highly of me."

"Well, at all events," replied Miss Trevelyan, in a light tone, "you are not grown conceited, and I am not sure that humility was one of the qualities for which you were most famous formerly—hey! Theresa? Do you remember all our quarrels on that subject?"—and again smiling on her as she drew her towards her, "Dear, dear Theresa!" added Miss Trevelyan, "what good it does me beholding your young face once more; and it does my heart good also to read in your eyes that you too are happy at seeing your poor Treevy again—that you still care for us, and feel pleasure in being at last restored to your old home at Richmond."

Theresa's quivering lips alone answered this appeal to

Digitized by Google

her feelings. "I have so much to learn about you," continued Miss Trevelyan, "so much I want to ask, I hardly know where to commence my queries; but first tell me, where is your husband? why did he not come with you to-day?"

"He is gone out of town with a friend," replied Theresa.

"He is quite well, I hope—still handsome?—and of course still *desperately* in love," added Miss Trevelyan, smiling gaily in Theresa's face.

Theresa drew away—her colour deepened in her cheeks, and there was a pause. At last, Miss Trevelyan taking her hand in both hers, as she fixed her eyes steadfastly on her—"Theresa!" said she, "are you happy?"

"Happy!" repeated Theresa, quickly, in a strange uncertain tone, (for that is a startling word when the heart does not readily echo to its sound)—"yes, to be sure I am! Happy as the world goes," she added, with assumed gaiety; "we must all have our cares, you know. Why you, yourself, dear Treevy, were always telling me this world was not the place in which to seek, or hope for happiness. I did not believe your words then," said she, with a melancholy smile; "I knew nothing of the world in those days beyond this kind sheltering roof. I chose to leave the 'happy valley,' and of course met with the ills of life like others; but really, after all, during these last five years, mine has been such a strange unsettled existence, I have hardly had leisure to think whether I was happy—still less, perhaps, whether I was good."

Miss Trevelyan looked earnestly in Theresa's face, at a loss to guess from her odd flighty manner, whether there was any foundation for the quick suspicions to which her suddenly altered tone and countenance had given rise. She therefore forbore to press the matter any farther just then—but again taking her hand, she kindly said, "We must by degrees tell each other everything that has happened to us since we parted.—My story will be soon told, Heaven knows!" she added with a sigh.

"It is your story, however, which I wish to hear," said Theresa, eagerly catching at her friend's words, in

Digitized by Google

order to turn the discourse from herself; although I fear I can but too well guess what it has been. You *have* suffered—you *still*, I am afraid, suffer much."

"God, my child, proportions our strength to the evils He wisely inflicts! Had it been shown me all I was destined to endure, I fear weak human nature would have shrunk from the sight in dismay; and yet, year after year of constant suffering has passed over me, and my poor worn-out frame still struggles on; indeed, I am now so used to pain, I have nearly lost all recollection of the enjoyment of ease and health, and am, therefore, spared those aggravations to my sufferings which such comparisons always occasion—such mere bodily discomforts, particularly those of a body so exhausted as mine now is, cannot last long, and are therefore easy trials to our faith and fortitude, compared to those to which this world's happiness exposes us. Oh, Theresa! I wish your task in life may be as easy as mine has now become," continued Miss Trevelyan, gazing in her young friend's face with the tenderest expression of interest; "I wish I felt sure you were as happy in your lot as I am in mine; but still you can be sustained by that same Almighty Power which has strengthened me; it is through that divine assisting Power alone that I have been enabled to submit to tortures from which my human nature would have shrunk; it is that Power which now opens to me a happiness beyond the imagination of man to conceive!—for I look to it with certainty, as I know that He in whom I have trusted is faithful—that what I could not have done for myself, has been done for me—and that I may therefore die in the sure hope of a blessed immortality. How, therefore, with such prospects before me, can I complain, if a few more hours or days must still be passed in sickness here below; for this world, with its joys and sorrows, has become so little to me,—indeed, I had no idea I still clung so much to any one earthly thing as I now feel I do to you, Theresa, and I bless God for his goodness in granting me this one more earthly pleasure."

While she spoke, Miss Trevelyan's countenance had assumed a degree of animation which rendered its expression almost celestial. Theresa gazed on her in mute

Digitized by Google

astonishment. "I have so long prayed," she continued, "to be allowed to see you again before I die!—and my prayer at last seemed so hopeless, that as I now look on your dear face, I could almost fancy you were a blessed messenger sent from Heaven to tell me that my hour of release was come, and that I am soon to be admitted into that world where there will be no more pain nor sorrow, and where we shall be again united for ever in happiness."

It was so long since such words—since the voice of religion had sounded in Theresa's ears, that its accents awed and overpowered her, and gazing on her friend as on a being of some superior order, she involuntarily sunk on her knees. "If you knew," said she, in a passion of grief and contrition, "the weak erring creature at your side, you would not talk of meeting her in that happy world to which you are hastening. Oh! if I had but your consolations!" she continued, clasping her hands together in fervour, "if those hopes—those feelings, which make you look even upon death with a smile, could but quiet the fever of my mind—but it is impossible—impossible."

"Dearest Theresa, do not talk so strangely," said Miss Trevelyan with eagerness,—for in the exalted rectitude of her own mind, she conceived Theresa's words to mean no more than the contrite sorrows of a pious heart;—"do not so injure yourself—do not so injure your God as to think he will not listen to the prayer of faith, although it proceeds from a troubled soul."

Just then, Trevelyan, hoping the first agitation of the meeting was over, returned. On seeing Miss Trevelyan's unusually flushed cheeks and tearful eyes, and Theresa on her knees by her side, he hardly knew whether to advance or retire. "We are at our confessions," said Miss Trevelyan, smiling; and holding out her hand towards her brother, "I am trying to reconcile our poor wanderer to herself."

Theresa, well aware that Trevelyan might but too well guess at the real cause of her self-accusations, did not dare to meet his eyes, but hid her face on Miss Trevelyan's pillow. "Calm yourself, dear Theresa," said she, "it is I who have agitated you by talking in a manner

Digitized by Google

which, perhaps, is not fair, for I am conscious I must see death and all connected with it, in a very different light from those who are still in the heyday of life; for having so long looked it in the face, it has really become 'mine own familiar friend:' but we will talk no more of these things now; and here is poor Frederick, to whom I have not yet spoken."

Still Theresa wept on;—Trevelyan approached her—Sanctioned by the presence of his sister, he ventured to press her hand to his lips, to hold it clasped in his; and Miss Trevelyan, whose pure mind saw in his caresses to her weeping friend, no more than the commiserating kindness of pity, thanked heaven that the poor exile was again restored to his care.

How long they continued thus, Trevelyan certainly could not have told; for those delightful moments, during which he felt as if his heart was united to Theresa's, passed by too quickly for him to be able to take any cognizance of their flight. At last, little St. Ives running in, put an end to this general feeling of sadness and sentiment. "Pretty lady crying," said he; is the pretty lady naughty? Papa, what has she done!"

"Tell the pretty lady, St. Ives," said Miss Trevelyan, smiling, "that I will forgive her, if she will behave better in future."

"If you good, you may get up," said the child, in a coaxing tone, as he put his little arms round Theresa's neck. Theresa raised her head, and fondly kissing the boy, "Come," said she, "you and I will go and play together in the garden," and quickly rising from her knees, as she seized his hand, she was out of the room and down the veranda steps in a minute.

When thus left *tête-à-tête*, their hearts both full of Theresa, Trevelyan felt almost bound to impart to his sister his doubts and fears respecting her; but he shrunk from the task, for it seemed to him that, in giving expression to those fears, he should embody them into reality, and it was too sweet to his ears to listen to her kind expressions with regard to their prodigal child, for him voluntarily to throw out hints respecting her, which would necessarily disturb the affectionate interest she inspired.

Digitized by Google

Before long, John appeared with the luncheon, and little St. Ives' repast. "Go and fetch your child," said Miss Trevelyan to her brother, "for I am sure it is already full late for his dinner, and his companion also had much better take something."

Trevelyan was nothing loth to obey his sister's orders, and soon joined Theresa in the garden. Her cheeks were still wet with tears, and although she was talking gaily to the child, her eyes were fixed with an abstracted melancholy gaze on those scenes which recalled so much to her stricken mind. "I am sent to summon you to luncheon," said Trevelyan; "for my sister thinks that both the playfellows will be much the better for a little refreshment.

"Send in St. Ives," said Theresa in a low voice to Trevelyan, as she took his arm, "and stay here a minute or two with me, for I am not yet fit to encounter your sister.

The boy ran into the house, and they were left alone. Theresa walked slowly towards the parapet-wall, and then stopped. "How much does that beautiful Thames, so calmly gliding by, say to me!" she mournfully exclaimed, after a moment's pause.

"And to me too, Theresa," said Trevelyan, "do you think it says nothing?"

It was the first time that he had, notwithstanding her injunction, called her Theresa, and the sound, as it escaped his lips, gave a strange thrill to his heart.

"This time seven years," she continued, as if she had not noticed his words, "you were rowing me and poor Treevy on that same lovely Thames.—What a happy being I then was!—I *would* seek for greater happiness —and I found—what those must find, who seek for that which does not exist."

Theresa, quite overpowered by her feelings, covered her face with her handkerchief, and wept so bitterly, that Trevelyan, supporting her with his arm, led her to the bench under the Catalpa tree. To that well-known spot, where she had so often in days of yore listened (alas! too carelessly) to the counsels and pious exhortations of her friend. They sat for some time in silence. All around them spoke of change and decay; for the garden,

Digitized by Google

unvisited by its owner, was totally neglected, and a few persevering roses alone still made their way through the grass and nettles which had overgrown the parterres.

"Poor Treevy!" Theresa at length exclaimed, "I see it is many a day since she has been here! Oh! what a wretch I am to murmur at my lot, when I see her enduring so patiently such tortures!—and how unreasonable we are! for, would you believe it," she continued—"miserably suffering as she is, I envy your sister—I envy her those strange feelings of enthusiasm which support her so wonderfully through all her trials, although I must own I can neither enter into, nor indeed, comprehend them; for she appears to me to live in a perfect dream; and yet—I cannot help feeling reverence for her delusion."

"Delusion! do you call it?" inquired Trevelyan.

"Yes, surely," replied Theresa quickly; "why none but the fanatical martyrs of old, or some half mad devotee, ever looked upon bodily torture, and death, in the light she does; and I must confess, if it is religion which does all that for her, it is a religion of which I can form no idea?—*cela me passe!*"

Trevelyan sighed. "Allow my sister, dear, dear Lady Herbert," said he, "to let you into the secrets of that extraordinary religion, the effects of which you acknowledge you admire, and even envy. Oh! let her—as I am sure she can—speak peace to your wounded mind." Trevelyan had taken Theresa's hand in his, and looked earnestly in her face.

"Well, we will see what can be done," said she, with a most bewitching smile; "I will try and be what you wish—at least try and be better than I am now, which I fear will not be difficult,"—and resuming a look of gaiety—"but we will talk no more about these things at present, for we should return to Treevy; I think I feel more equal to encountering her now, and I promise I will not again behave so like a fool, nor treat you with any more of my childish nonsense."

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER III.

Think not temptation comes i'th' form of sorrow,
In that of pain, or sickness, or misfortune:
'Tis long since Satan tried them all on Job,
And better learn'd to understand his trade
From being baffled. Wealth, prosperity,
The smiles, the witching pleasures of the world,
These are instruments to work with—these
Will put thee to the proof——. *Old Play.*

LITTLE were Theresa and her companions aware, while they were thus engrossed, the one by her sorrows, and the other by the interest of the moment, of the many eyes which had, during the last half hour, been fixed upon them from the window of the neighbouring house.

Miss Brown happened to be just stepping into Mrs. Hopkins's, when they drove up to Miss Trevelyan's door, and she entered open-mouthed on the subject.

"For goodness sake, my dear ma'am," she exclaimed, in a prodigious bustle, on reaching her friend's drawing-room, "can you tell me whose carriage that is which is just arrived at Miss Trevelyan's, with a lady and gentleman, and a sweet little boy?"

"Carriage!" exclaimed Mrs. Hopkins, starting from her seat and hurrying to the window, while every feeling of her soul was instantly roused into expectation and wonder.

"I saw them get out," continued Miss Brown, "and I thought the gentleman looked like Lord Launceston."

"Oh, no!" said Mrs. Hopkins, significantly shaking her head; "that is not Lord Launceston's carriage. Why, there are no arms upon it—no crest, nor coronet."

"No, indeed—no more there are," said her friend, ashamed of her own extraordinary dulness in having overlooked such important circumstances: "and yet I am pretty certain it was Lord Launceston who came in it, though I could not distinguish whether it was Lady Launceston who accompanied him."

Digitized by Google

"Their carriage *may* be repairing," said Mrs. Hopkins, thoughtfully; "and they *may* have hired one during the time, but *that* is not Lord Launceston's barouche —that I can swear to—and, bless me! see! the coachman is a common job, without a livery!"

"Very true, indeed," said Miss Brown, again shocked at her want of observation. "How very strange!"

"Very unaccountable indeed!" said Mrs. Hopkins; "for Miss Trevelyan has so few visiters—in fact, I may say n ne—none now at least who come in carriages."

"I hear she is very ill," said Miss Brown.

"Oh, dear, yes! quite dying," replied Mrs. Hopkins. "Dr. Hume says she cannot possibly last many months. It is some dreadful inward complaint, I believe, but I have never inquired, for such sort of things really make one sick. I am sure I have not an idea what she does with herself, for I see nothing of her, although I am her next-door neighbour. I am not *good* enough for her, I suppose," continued Mrs. Hopkins, drawing herself up; "for I hear she is more sanctified than ever, and has struck up a great friendship with that new clergyman, Mr. Rivers, who makes every body cry, and give up going to the play. He is quite one of the high-flown, so they suit to perfection. I know it is all very well to be religious, and that sort of thing, particularly when in Miss Trevelyan's situation; but I can't help thinking it would be much better if she were to collect her neighbours around her to enliven her a little, and have now and then a cheerful rubber at cribbage or piquet. A very nice quiet game is piquet—and there is a great deal of play in it, I assure you. Now, would not that sort of thing be much better for her than moping all alone? "Of course," continued Mrs. Hopkins, "we all must die, that every body knows without a clergyman to come and tell one; but I cannot see any use in holding one's nose over it, as one may say, which it seems to me Miss Trevelyan does."

Little did Mrs. Hopkins know of the "peace, hope, and joy," of that being to whom, as a solace when on the brink of the grave, she would have recommended a cheerful rubber at cribbage, or a quiet game at piquet! Miss

Digitized by Google

Trevelyan needed no cheering, for she had that inward "joy which passeth show," and "with which the world intermeddleth not."

Her character, in its progress towards the Christian perfection to which she had now attained, had gradually thrown off the languid melancholy which had for a time clouded her path in life and shaded her best qualities. She was then struggling with human infirmity, she had now obtained the mastery; and her purified spirit issued from the conflict bright and strong. The cheering sun of religion now shone on every thing around her, both in the moral and material world; and as she lay on her couch at her window, and from it beheld God's handy-works in the lovely face of Nature, she blessed Him for having so decked out her prison-house, and for giving her a heart to value His bounties. She still indeed "found tongues in trees, books in the running stream, and sermons in stones," but saw *good* in every thing.

She now even welcomed society, not perhaps that of Mrs. Hopkins; for the first requisite in social intercourse is a mutual understanding of each other's speech, and those two individuals, (although next-door neighbours,) certainly did not speak the same moral language; but Miss Trevelyan joyfully availed herself of the proffered friendship and visits of Mr. Rivers and his family, and they as readily contributed all in their power to her daily comfort. She was no now longer a solitary being. Her dwelling was no longer silent and deserted, and she felt the change with pious gratitude. Often, when the younger part of this excellent family had been thus cheering her solitude by their music or conversation, her thoughts reverted anxiously to her much-loved Theresa; and ever disposed to self-accusation, she now lamented over those former solitary habits, which had not only prevented her deriving all the comfort and pleasure which she might from the society of her young friend, but had also so much circumscribed her own powers of being of use to her. When visited by these, now useless regrets, many a fervent prayer did she put up to heaven for the absent object of her solicitude—for that misguided Theresa, who the while,

Digitized by Google

careless of herself, was madly courting those very dangers which her anxious friend was deprecating for her.

It was during the agitating meeting between this long-lost Theresa and her dying friend that Mrs. Hopkins' conversation with Miss Brown relative to her neighbour's mental resources took place; and they were still descanting on the merits of piquet as a preparation for death, when the appearance of Trevelyan in his sister's garden put a stop to the discussion, by instantly attracting the attention of the lynx-eyed Mrs. Hopkins.

"Why I do declare, there is a gentleman walking down Miss Trevelyan's lawn," said she; "and sure enough, as you say, it is Lord Launceston himself."

The two friends immediately left their seats, and hurried to the window, that they might not lose the most trivial circumstance which could throw any light on the job coachman and mysterious carriage.

"See, see!" exclaimed Miss Brown, after having watched Trevelyan for some time in silence, as he stood gazing on the view before him; "there now is the very person who came with Lord Launceston standing by him—but I am sure it is not Lady Launceston."

"Oh, dear no, it is not at all like her!" said Mrs. Hopkins, evidently at fault; "but wait till I get my opera glass, and then I'll tell you. Why, bless me!—I declare!—I do believe that it is Miss Howard! Lady Herbert Leslie as is! Why, I thought she had been taken prisoner by Buonaparte, for intriguing with his generals; but I am quite certain it is Miss Howard. And so it seems Lord Launceston and she came down together cheek by jowl!"—and the friends looked eagerly in each other's faces for the mutual corroboration of their scandalous suspicions.

"Very extraordinary, an't it?—and pray notice how they are standing together arm in arm in such a strange familiar manner. There, now she is crying!—what ridiculous affectation!" said Miss Brown, shrugging up her shoulders. "And I do declare he is actually taking her round the waist—and only look how close he is sitting to her on the bench, staring her full in the face; I never saw any thing like it! why it is quite disagreeable, and really one hardly knows which way to look!"

Digitized by Google

Mrs. Hopkins, however, soon settled the point as to the direction in which to turn her offended eyes, by fixing them still more effectually, through the medium of her glass, on the objects of her curiosity.—"Now do observe how impudently she looks at him," said she, "and what a strange, flaunting, Frenchified figure she is, with her long greasy ringlets and her reticule; and there they are off together again arm-in-arm! Well, it is all vastly pretty, really, and mighty creditable to Miss Trevelyan countenancing such doings. I have often heard," continued Mrs. Hopkins, "that my Lady Herbert was no better than she should be; for you know when Lord Herbert, poor man, was killed abroad, she went off with the French General who had run him through the body. Don't you remember hearing all about that affair, which happened, I think, about five or six years ago? What she has been doing with herself since, I don't know, but no good probably; and I certainly had no idea that the Launceston family ever would, or indeed *could*, have countenanced her again.—Miss Trevelyan too with her prodigious sanctity!"

"Oh, but that is always the way with those saints," rejoined Miss Brown; "they positively prefer the society of women of bad character, because, I suppose, they have something to preach to them about, and hope for the honour of their conversion; but dear preserve me! all the world knew formerly that Colonel Trevelyan and Miss Howard flirted together at a great rate,—only, as he was not then a Lord, nor had any prospect of being one at that time, probably she thought she had better not let a Marquis's son slip through her fingers."

"Bye the bye!" exclaimed Mrs. Hopkins with a look of ecstacy, such as might be imagined to illumine the countenance of a discoverer of the longitude! "this is the history of the carriage without arms or livery! Pretty doings indeed! and I am sure I pity poor dear Lady Launceston from my heart; she is, I understand, a most excellent exemplary person, and poor woman, cannot, I am sure, be a very happy one!"

How lucky it is that there are such good thick walls of separation between neighbours! between those who are

Digitized by Google

instructed "to love each other as brethren! to prefer one another in honour."

On the other side of this very necessary partition which divided Mrs. Hopkins from Miss Trevelyan, the latter was from her couch watching with a smile of affection her nephew, little St. Ives, as with a most voracious appetite he was devouring his roast chicken and currant tart —old deaf John waiting in due form behind his little lordship's chair; after having, in consideration of his clean frock and trousers, bound him up in his napkin, till he could scarcely breathe or move.

"Oh, here comes the pretty lady and papa," said St. Ives; "and here's some good tart for the pretty lady."

"No, dear boy, no tart for me, I cannot eat," said Theresa; then suddenly observing John, she hastened up to him, and kindly shaking the old man by the hand, said, "How do you do, John? I am very glad to see you looking so well; why you are as young as ever."

"I am sure, my Lady, I may return the compliment," retorted old John, most gallantly, and grinning from ear to ear, "for really your Ladyship looks quite buxom-like —I can't say as much for *us*," he added in a lower voice, shaking his head, and looking mournfully towards his emaciated mistress; "and I hope my Lord is well, and all the little lords and ladies, if so be there is any."

"Quite well, thank you, we are all quite well," replied Theresa hastily, in order to put an end to his queries.

"Ay, and I dare say none of you, sorry to be home again," continued John, "for England is the only Christian-like place to live in after all, and I dare say your Ladyship was sadly put about in them French countries, having nothing set comfortable for you; indeed I have heard, (but whether it is true I don't know, and I really can hardly credit the story,) that they never rub down their tables in France, and that they have no such thing as livery servants."

"Yes indeed, John," replied Theresa, endeavouring to check a laugh, "both these reports are but too true."

John threw up his eyes to heaven—"Lord help us! what will this world come to!"—then observing St. Ives had finished his repast, he, postponing for the moment

Digitized by Google

the remainder of his reflections on revolutions, and livery servants, set to work to wash his little master's face and hands, while Theresa wandered round the room, looking earnestly on every well-remembered object connected with her past life.

"Ah, there is my old friend the guitar, I see," said she, taking it up from the piano forte, "and all gone to wreck and ruin like its former owner; for its strings now seem only to jar, and can give pleasure to no one,"—she paused and gave a deep sigh. But in a minute, making an effort to cast off the melancholy reflections to which the sight of the broken instrument had given rise, she resumed in a more cheerful tone, "The guitar, however, can at all events be put to rights, so I will take it away with me and new string it, and the next time I come and see you, dear Treevy, I will sing all your old favourites."

During the remainder of her visit, Theresa was to all appearance, the light-hearted being of former days, and these assumed spirits again reassuring Miss Trevelyan, she gazed on her with the tenderest feelings of affection, in blissful ignorance of the many sad changes which had taken place in her young friend.

There was, in short, a mysterious attraction about Theresa which no one with any heart could resist. The very circumstance of her varying, uncertain spirits, and the wild ebullitions of feeling or thoughtlessness to which she alternately gave way, increased the interest which she could not fail to inspire by the addition of doubt and anxiety. A doubt, however, unmixed with any suspicion of intended deception on her part, for her mind was like her complexion, perfectly transparent; and indeed it was this very artlessness of character which gave rise to the feeling of uncertainty about her; as, in utter carelessness of consequences or interpretations, she yielded to every passing sensation, and thus frequently betrayed feelings, which one less guileless, and possessing more of this world's wisdom, would have carefully concealed.

It was now time to begin to think of departure, although every one concerned contemplated with reluctance the end of a visit which had in different ways been so agreeable to them all. As for Theresa, she felt as if,

Digitized by Google

during the last few hours, she had breathed a purer moral air; and the degree of innate rectitude which still clung to her, made her welcome its refreshing influence on her soul, although she had not courage to act up to the better feelings which it had for the moment inspired, or to extricate herself from the life of unprincipled thoughtlessness in which she had now been so long entangled.

"God bless and preserve you, my dearest Theresa!" said Miss Trevelyan at parting, "and let me see you soon again, the sight of you does me so much good."

As Theresa returned her friend's kind embraces, and looked at the slim transparent hand which held her's, she was but too well aware that if she wished again to behold her the visit must not be long deferred, and carried away by the feelings which the sight of the patient sufferer had excited, she at the minute fancied she would willingly have devoted her whole existence to her afflicted protectress, and thus endeavour to expiate her past follies by a life of piety and seclusion.

The party entered the carriage, and drove from the door in silence. For Trevelyan noticed with too much pleasure the present emotions of Theresa's heart, to wish to disturb the reverie in which he saw she was absorbed, and being himself also depressed and pre-occupied, he willingly left her to her own reflections. Before long St. Ives' little head began to nod with sleep, and Trevelyan fearful he might fall, endeavoured, but in vain, to prop him up with the cushions of the carriage.

"Let him come and sit by me," said Theresa, whose attention was at last attracted towards her companion, "and I will wrap him up in my cloak that he may not catch cold."

The drowsy child was placed at her side, she put her arm round him, and thus carefully screened from the air he soon fell into a profound sleep on her shoulder. She gazed on him for some time in silence, and then wiping away a tear which had fallen on his rosy cheek from her's—"Poor child!" said she, "how happy! how peaceful he looks!"—long may that peaceful happiness last!" Trevelyan, much affected, did not speak, and not another word was uttered by either of them until the rattling noise

Digitized by Google

of the carriage on the stones of London, disagreeably broke the trance into which they had both fallen.

There is a silence between those of congenial minds, still more delightful perhaps than the intercourse of conversation. Not the most evanescent impulse of Theresa's mutable soul escaped Trevelyan's observation, and she —when not wholly engrossed by her own—read instinctively his every feeling. In short there seemed to be still some mysterious link between them, which fate herself could not break, although she had for a time appeared to counteract her own design by separating two beings so formed for each other, and who appeared to have been thrown together, purposely to secure the good and happiness of both. This unnatural contention seemed however now at an end, and each weary heart to be permitted to find in the other that repose of which it had been so long in search. And when thus, once again enjoying the luxury of sympathy, Trevelyan believed he could so discipline his mind as to raise his affections for Theresa above all selfish considerations, and be content to make her good and happiness his first object in life, independent of his own.

Emboldened by this self-deceiving thought, he now ventured to gaze on his abstracted companion, and as he fancied that he read in the softened expression of her eyes, and the sadness visible in her eloquent countenance, indications of altered feelings, he gave way to the most flattering hopes for the future, when he should behold the object of his solicitude again restored to peace and happiness, and have tutored himself into content. In the virtuous enthusiasm of the moment, Trevelyan possibly gave himself credit for much more philosophy than he in fact possessed—but his very mistake was to his honour; and strangely palsied must be the heart of that man, who can look on his favourite child nursed in the arms of the woman he has loved, and remained unmoved.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IV.

"Should those fond hopes e'er forsake thee
Which now so sweetly thy heart employ;
Should the cold world come to wake thee
From all thy visions of youth and joy;
Oh 'tis then—he thou hast slighted
Would come to cheer thee when all seem'd o'er;
Then the Truant, lost and blighted,
Would to his bosom be taken once more."

Every one has surely felt that there have been moments in their existence—not moments of peculiar important events, but on the contrary, of comparative insignificance—which have nevertheless left unaccountably strong impressions on the mind. Such moments may have been marked merely by some accidental enjoyment of the beauties of nature, or attended solely by some other outward circumstance of apparently as trifling interest. But such delicious recollections which have so strangely struck our imaginations, have always had, (though often unknown to ourselves,) some mysterious connexion with our destiny or disposition, by the means of which they are thus fixed in the mind, and obtain their undying charm. So trifling are sometimes the outward features of these recollections, that they may be forgotten even by ourselves, until some as insignificant passing event touching the same string in our hearts, that former bright spot suddenly shines forth to our mind's eye in all its original fascination.

Such were to Trevelyan the impressions of this day spent at Richmond, of which, happiness and joy had certainly not been the prominent features; yet, ever during the remainder of his life *that* day was marked in his memory as one of those peculiar moments, which our imagination consecrates.

When the carriage stopped at the door of Mivart's Hotel, it was with difficulty that little St. Ives could be

Digitized by Google

roused from his sleep, and persuaded to leave his resting-place. "Blessings on thee, dear boy!" said Theresa, as she fondly kissed his half-stupified face, and resigned him to the care of his father; then holding out her hand to Trevelyan, "I do not ask you in," she said, "for in truth I am in every way tired, and must go and rest both body and mind."

It was now late, and as the Penrhyns and some of the female family connexions were to dine with him, Trevelyan hurried to Cavendish Square as fast as his child's pace would allow. On reaching home, he found that Augusta was already gone to dress for dinner; he therefore directly deposited little St. Ives in the nursery, and in his way down stairs stopped at his wife's dressing-room. He found her in unusual spirits and good humour, being in a perfect ecstacy with the house at Cheshunt, and at the success of her inquiries and negotiations. "It was so airy and clean! such an excellent nursery!" with a room opening to the right and another opening to the left—and all so convenient! Then she found there was a very clever apothecary, particularly used to children's complaints, within half a mile: "In short," added Augusta, "there is but one objection which you can possibly make to the place, which is, that I fear you will think the rent rather high."

Trevelyan too happy to find Lady Launceston in so agreeable a mood, and feeling that he certainly owed her some compensation for the manner in which he had spent that day, made no difficulties. Augusta was in raptures. "Griffiths can go down to-morrow and settle it all," said she "and there is a regular carrier three times a week, so we can send some of our things next Friday, and can so arrange that the children shall go one of the carrier days, and then their beds can be taken down that morning, and be all ready for them at Cheshunt by the evening; nothing can be more convenient. So, you see, it only required taking a little trouble, and all was soon settled."

Augusta was dressing for the ball, and as at this moment the maid was busily employed decorating her mistress's hair, and thereby entirely intercepted Trevelyan

Digitized by Google

from her view, he thought there could not altogether be a more favourable moment for the breaking of that ice of concealment which had hitherto existed between them on the subject of Theresa, particularly as he was convinced that St. Ives would soon betray in whose company he had passed the day. Aware, therefore, that it would be wise to have the first word of the story, and at once boldly tell the truth, he with his hand on the lock of the door, and having already half opened it, said, "Both carriages may be used to-night, if necessary, and if it should be any convenience to the Penrhyns to have ours: for,"—and he drew a long breath,—"for Lady Herbert Leslie also went to see my sister to-day, and so I went to Richmond with her."

Augusta said nothing, and as Trevelyan did not see her face, he could not tell what language her countenance might have spoken on hearing this piece of intelligence: and inexpressibly relieved at having thus got over the dreaded confession, he immediately left his wife's apartment and hurried to his own.

When he entered the drawing-room before dinner he found Augusta and the children were there already, as well as the Penrhyns and some of their other guests. Mr. Penrhyn, who was particularly partial to little St. Ives, had him on his knee, and as Trevelyan went up to him, addressed him with, "What is all this long story your boy is trying to tell me about a pretty lady and a currant tart?"

The deepened colour in Trevelyan's face might have betrayed to his friend his full consciousness of the subject of the child's conversation, but Mr. Penrhyn, occupied with his companion did not observe him. "Come St. Ives," said he, kindly encouraging the narrator, "try again: what is it you want to say?"

"Why St. Ives say," continued the child, "that me went with papa to see a pretty lady up-stairs in her own room, and then we went to Richmond to see aunt Treevy, and papa and the pretty lady were such favourites together!—and she said she would be St. Ives' mamma if me would be her little boy—and me would like very

Digitized by Google

much to be pretty lady's little boy, but then St. Ives is mamma's boy."

"St. Ives is a very foolish little chatterbox," said Trevelyan, passing his hand over the child's mouth as if in play, in order to stop his story.

"St. Ives, don't make such a noise," said Augusta, "or I shall send you away."

The boy coloured up, and was for a few minutes silent, but soon encouraged by Mr. Penrhyn's notice, he returned to the events of the morning. "Poor pretty lady cried so!" resumed the little narrator: "but aunt Treevy said if she would be good she might play with St. Ives, and so we had such fun in the garden and such a nice currant tart, but the pretty lady could not eat any of it," and he shook his little head in commiseration.

Lady Launceston here, with a look and manner of unusual displeasure, got up and rang the bell. "Send Hitchcock here for the children directly," said she, as soon as the servants appeared—and in a minute the formidable Hitchcock carried off poor little St. Ives in the *beau milieu* of his story. He did not dare remonstrate, no more did Trevelyan, and for more reasons than one he had not himself particularly enjoyed the subject which his boy had chosen to comment upon; and besides, the presence of the children in the drawing-room was one of the disputed points between him and his wife, as he, with perhaps more fondness than wisdom, was always anxious to have them with him when he was there, and Lady Launceston on her part strongly objected to an indulgence which did not at all suit her strict system of education.

As soon as the female part of her guests had that evening departed, Lady Launceston set off for D——e House with her young charge, leaving Trevelyan to follow with Mr. Penrhyn. By the time these two latter reached the scene of action, the ball-room was quite full, and dancing had begun. Waltzes and quadrilles were not then introduced into England, so that the world of fashion was still labouring through the endless avenues of country dances.

Digitized by Google

Trevelyan, having no particular object of interest for which to brave the heat and buffeting of the crowd, remained alone near the door at which he had entered the dancing-room, while Mr. Penrhyn went on in search of his daughter. The monotonous drone of the music having soon thrown him into a reverie, his thoughts had of course reverted to Richmond and Theresa; and, recuring with satisfaction to the impression evidently made upon her mind by his sister's exemplary goodness, he gave way to the hope that she might still be checked in her thoughtless career before it was too late, and saved from the dangers by which she seemed to be threatened. While still wholly occupied with these reflections, the unvarying wearisome tune at last ceased—the crowd of dancers dispersed—and as they cleared off, he, to his astonishment, beheld on the opposite side of the room, in the full blaze of beauty and decoration, and the evident object of general attention,—Theresa herself!—On one side of her was a person whom he did not know, and on the other Mr. Lascelles, on whose arm she was leaning.

Trevelyan could hardly believe his eyes! for she had said nothing to him about being at the ball; and although several hours had passed since they had parted, and there had consequently been full time for the great change in her dress and appearance, yet he could hardly believe it was the same, sad, subdued, sensitive Theresa, whom he had so lately quitted. The free glance of her eyes, which had so painfully struck him before, again replaced the softened expression of tenderness and sentiment which had left so delightful an impression on his heart. Again, as on that night when he had first seen her, her beautiful neck and shoulders were indelicately exposed; and again her whole appearance was calculated to excite astonishment rather than interest—admiration rather than respect.

Trevelyan's first impulse was instantly to join her,—but he checked himself: he was aware he must not give way to the all-engrossing and increasing interest of her society; he remembered that Lady Launceston herself was now present; and (what perhaps influenced him still more powerfully than any of these considerations) he was too much disheartened and piqued by Theresa's present

Digitized by Google

appearance even to wish to attract her attention; he therefore continued, as if spell-bound, at his place, watching her every look and gesture, which, to his alarmed imagination, spoke but too plainly the allowed familiarity between her and Lascelles.

While thus engaged, he suddenly beheld his wife approach the spot where they were, and an instinctive feeling of dread made him hold his breath, in painful anticipation of what was likely to follow. Theresa immediately recollected Lady Launceston, and instantly, with her hand extended, she advanced towards her. Augusta stopped, and for a minute stared steadfastly in her face;—the proffered hand was not taken,—and a cold, formal, distant curtsey was all the recognition which she vouchsafed. Trevelyan bit his lips in vexation, scarcely able to restrain the ejaculation of anger which trembled on them.

Theresa still stood beside Lady Launceston, with a smile on her face, and it was evident by the expression of her countenance, that she was addressing something kind and flattering to her. Augusta's lips did not move in reply—there was another formal curtsey,—and she passed on.

Trevelyan's heart sunk within him at the wretched prospect for future domestic comfort which the short scene just enacted before him foretold. All his prophetic fears seemed thus verified, and irritated and disappointed by the conduct of all those with whom he was connected, as well by the ties of affection as those of irrevocable duty, he sat ruminating on his perplexing situation, hardly conscious where he was, or what was passing around him. At length Theresa's name pronounced close to him, instantly, and painfully, roused him from his abstraction.

"What a beautiful creature that Lady Herbert Leslie is!" exclaimed a distinguished-looking young man; "I declare it is impossible to keep one's eyes from her, and I have been staring at her till I am really ashamed."

"I dare say she has no objection," said his companion, with a sneering smile; "at least her eyes and dress both invite observation too much for her to have any right to

Digitized by Google

resent it: her beauty is perfect certainly, but I cannot say as much for her style and manners."

"Who in the world was she?" resumed his neighbour.

"Oh, I do not know exactly who, as to name and family. Leslie picked her up in one of his knight-errant love-freaks. Don't you remember, a few years ago, in one of our Funny Club expeditions to Richmond, his attention being extraordinarily attracted by some ballad-singer on the river? Well, she is the self-same person. He was so desperately smitten that evening that he went, like a fool, and took a lodging at Richmond; and at last succeeded in winning the fair songstress. I believe she is somebody's natural daughter, and, in one way, Leslie had more luck than he deserved, for it seems she had not only a beautiful voice, but money into the bargain."

"And where have they been ever since?" continued Theresa's admirer, his eyes still fixed upon her, "for I never saw or heard of her before."

"Oh, they have been abroad, and I understand have only just effected their escape from Paris, where they have been for some years among the *détenus*. Lascelles came with them, and it is very plain in what *capacity*, I think, as he and Lady Herbert seem inseparable. She appears to be here to-night under the patronage of Mrs. Lindsay, who is one of the greatest jades that ever breathed, so that altogether it is a fine mess! As for Leslie himself, who was always a sad dissipated fellow, he is, I find, now become a regular gambler. I saw him yesterday at Ascot betting in high style, as if he knew perfectly well what he was about, and he carried off a great deal of money."

It may easily be supposed what were Trevelyan's feelings during this conversation; for he was himself too well aware of many corroborating facts to doubt the general truth of the statement; and although his first impulse, on hearing Theresa so lightly spoken of, might have been, to resent such aspersions on her character, he could not but allow that her appearance and *ton* in society were but too well calculated to give rise to the most unfavourable conjectures, and he could not, therefore, venture to con-

Digitized by Google

tradict that of which he was himself again painfully doubtful. What he had now overheard, however, roused him from the state of vague passive anxiety which had hitherto oppressed him, and he resolved, at all hazards, to endeavour to rescue her from that self-destruction to which she seemed hastening. Theresa's honour, reputation, her very existence, seemed now at stake. The greater her danger, the more he was bound to protect her, and, as her father's friend, boldly to avow himself to be her's. If he could but prevail on Augusta to countenance her, all would be well; for not only her friendship would directly place Theresa in a totally different situation in the world from that into which she was now by unfortunate circumstances thrown, but by sanctioning his own, it would enable him to exert over her that influence which his heart told him he still possessed. Lady Launceston had good sense and principle, if not tenderness of feeling, and he thought it impossible, that when the whole was fairly explained to her, she could refuse to take by the hand a misguided, neglected being, who seemed to have no real friend but himself, and to whom he was bound by a solemn promise to her dying father.

All these considerations decided Trevelyan as to the line of conduct he should pursue, and he now only felt impatient to put it into execution. Again he fixed his eyes on the object of his anxiety, and at last saw her with her two companions leave the ball-room by the door which led into the opposite suite of apartments. As it was now late, he concluded he should see no more of her that night, nor indeed did he wish it; for he felt he could not now freely open his mind to her, and to speak to Theresa on common-place, uninteresting subjects, was always with him impossible: he therefore remained fixed to the spot, revolving in his mind in what manner to propitiate Augusta in her favour.

It was not long before Lady Launceston joined him, announcing her readiness to go home whenever he liked, as Mr. Penrhyn was willing to stay with his daughter. She did not say a word respecting her meeting with The-

Digitized by Google

resa, but Trevelyan fancied (it might however be only fancy) that her manner was even more than usually cold and dry; but Augusta was so habitually reserved, that it was not always easy to judge by her mere manner of what was passing in her mind. Trevelyan immediately rose from his seat, and followed his wife, but the crowd in the outward room being excessive, they made but slow progress.

Every one who has frequented London assemblies must surely be well acquainted with the sort of stupefied trance into which the mind is thrown, by the confused chorus of uninteresting voices, when it is strongly occupied by some object totally unconnected with the scene around. Thus entranced, Trevelyan moved mechanically along, making absent replies to the common-place remarks occasionally addressed to him, when suddenly a voice and laugh which always vibrated to his heart, struck on his ears, and quickly turning in the direction whence the sounds came, he beheld Theresa seated at a little distance, surrounded by a crowd of admiring young men, and the eternal Lascelles still at her side.

Trevelyan groaned in spirit, for all he saw and heard served only to confirm his fears, and render his hopes hopeless. Whether the laugh had also attracted Lady Launceston's attention towards her from whom it proceeded, cannot be ascertained; but she appeared to him to quicken her progress, and soon disappeared through the door-way which led to the top of the stairs. Trevelyan cast one more anxious look back at Theresa, and her eyes then met his. She coloured, and starting from her seat, came hastily up to him.

"I have seen Lady Launceston," said she, "and I saw you in the ball-room, and I can plainly perceive that you are displeased with me—though for what I hardly know;" but, as she uttered these last words, a still deeper blush betrayed her full consciousness of the offence—"however, we cannot discuss these matters now—but will you come to me to-morrow morning? I really want to speak to you,—to consult you."

On uttering these words, the expression of Theresa's

Digitized by Google

countenance strangely changed, and Trevelyan felt the nervous tremble of the hand which she had laid on his arm.—"You will come, will you not?"—said she, looking earnestly in his face, and then added in a lower tone, while an arch smile again suddenly illumined her features, "that is to say, if you dare; and pray come early, for I have much to say to you."

Trevelyan had no time to reflect on his answer, as he was fearful of irritating Augusta's possible jealousy by any further delay, and he therefore hastily agreed to the appointment.

"Thanks, thanks," said Theresa, again pressing his arm, "and you shall scold me as much as you please;" then casting on him a look of innocent, almost childish contrition, she again returned to her companions. During this short conversation Lascelles' eyes had been fixed upon her and Trevelyan; and with an expression which plainly told that the story of *les affaires* with *l'ami de la jeunesse* had not gone down with him any better than with Marianne.

Trevelyan immediately hurried after Lady Launceston, and found her already in the hall. He had not courage that night to commence his meditated appeal to her feelings in favour of Theresa; little therefore passed between them during their drive home, for although both were evidently occupied by the same engrossing subject, Augusta still pertinaciously maintained an impenetrable reserve with regard to her supposed rival, and Trevelyan wising to postpone the dreaded moment of breaking the ice until he had determined upon the best mode of attack, was also silent.

The matrimonial *tête-à-tête* breakfast in Cavendish Square was next morning even more than unusually cheerless. As soon as it was over, and the servants and children had all disappeared, Trevelyan, instead of repairing to his own room, according to his usual habit, followed his wife into the inner drawing-room, and sat down by the table at which she was then writing a note. The note was finished, delivered to the servant, and the door closed. Trevelyan then summoning all his

Digitized by Google

courage, at once addressed Augusta on the subject next his heart.

"Did you see Lady Herbert Leslie at D——e House, last night?" said he.

"Yes," replied Augusta, with evident astonishment in her countenance at his venturing to name or even allude to Theresa. "I by chance fell in with her, and she volunteered to come up and introduce *herself* to me; I am sure if she had not, I should never have known her, for I never saw such an extraordinary figure as she is become."

"Are you going to call upon her?" continued Trevelyan, after a moment's pause, and in as composed a tone as he could assume.

"Yes, perhaps I may just once call upon her," said Lady Launceston, "that is to say if I find any one else has done so, because she was formerly at Trevelyan Castle, and because Lord Herbert was a friend of my poor brother's; but I cannot of course be expected to do more than leave my name, nor can even *you* wish I should."

"Yes, indeed I do," rejoined Trevelyan with eagerness, "I not only wish, but earnestly request of you to show her every kindness in your power."

Augusta, with an expression of astonishment mingled with anger, hastily said—"You really surprise me by such a request! and I can only suppose that you are totally ignorant of the very light manner in which Lady Herbert is talked of; although I should have thought her mere appearance might have given rise to some suspicions to her disadvantage. At all events, however, whatever your opinion of her may be, mine is quite settled, and you must allow me in this instance to be the best judge of my own conduct, for I know what is due, not only to myself, but to society."

Trevelyan felt his temper rising, but he commanded himself. "I will allow," said he, still subduing his voice and manner to the utmost, "that Lady Herbert's dress and appearance are against her, but remember that such probably is the fashion of those with whom of necessity

Digitized by Google

she has been associating in France, and the same cause may have operated on her manners, which naturally have caught somewhat of the *ton* of the society in which she has unfortunately been thrown, and which, although certainly objectionable, may strike us the more, from the total cessation of all intercourse between the countries; but these little peculiarities would, I am sure, be soon corrected in your society, and your countenance would of course at once silence all ill-natured prejudices against her. I need hardly add that I am perfectly satisfied that beyond a little want of prudence and judgment in such trifles, Lady Herbert's conduct is quite irreproachable, although she has been placed in very trying situations."

"I am very glad, for your sake," said Augusta with an unusual shortness of manner, "that you are so satisfied; but as I am not, I must beg to decline the honour of Lady Herbert's acquaintance."

Trevelyan did not immediately answer, for he felt his face had reddened with anger, and was fearful lest by an unguarded word he might irritate, where his object was only to propitiate; in a minute or two, however, again overcoming his feelings, he continued. "This, however, is hardly a question of opinion, for it is one of duty."

"Of duty!" exclaimed Augusta hastily; "I must say I cannot see how, or why, I am in duty bound to associate with a person of whom I think very unfavourably, merely because some years ago she chanced to pass a week or two under the same roof with me."

"You mistake me," said Trevelyan; "the duty to which I allude refers to myself, and I must entreat you will calmly listen to me. You know I was guardian to Theresa—to Lady Herbert Leslie," said he with impatience, and hastily correcting himself.—"Her father bequeathed her to my care, my protection. She is an orphan—she has no connections—not a friend in the world but myself, and therefore—"

"She seems to have no lack of friends," said Augusta interrupting him, and with a most provoking smile on her face, "and as they do not happen to be to my fancy, I

Digitized by Google

must on my part again beg you will excuse me from having any further intercourse with Lady Herbert Leslie than that of the commonest civility, and even *that* will be for *your* sake," said she, pointedly; "for had she not been a friend of *yours*, I certainly should not even have gone so far as to call upon her,—and few in *my* situation, —and under *all* circumstances,—would have done as much."

"Augusta!" said Trevelyan with a firmness of manner he rarely assumed, "I have never required any thing of you as a husband; I have seldom even contradicted your slightest wishes—I now ask a *favour* of you —I ask you to befriend one to whom I am bound by the sacred ties of a dying friend's wishes:—do not force me to demand of your duty, what I would wish to owe entirely to your affection."

"Ask any thing of me but *this*," said Augusta, with most provoking composure, "for on this subject my mind is quite made up."

"And so is mine," said Trevelyan with warmth, "therefore think of what I have said; for I give you notice, that as soon as Lord Herbert Leslie returns to town, I shall most certainly ask them *both* to the house."

Trevelyan hastily rose from his seat; for he felt that his temper, naturally none of the calmest, was irritated beyond his control, and he dared not therefore trust himself to longer parley; particularly as at that moment it seemed perfectly useless to push the matter any farther with Lady Launceston. He therefore, without uttering another word, abruptly left the room, and the outward door was heard to close with a bang as he hurried down stairs to his own apartment. This was the first downright quarrel which had ever taken place between Trevelyan and his wife; and notwithstanding the total absence of all sympathy and sentiment between them, still his kind affectionate heart felt it much; and as his passion cooled, and conscience resumed her power, his feelings were the more acute from not being totally free from those of self-reproach. Besides, he did not very well see how he should extricate himself from the diffi-

Digitized by Google

culties in which he was placed on Theresa's account; being too well aware of the inflexible nature of his wife's disposition to flatter himself with any hopes of her relenting in her favour.

This obduracy, so peculiar to Augusta, prepared him but too well for yielding to the charm of contrast in Theresa's ever interesting character and bewitching manners; and after passing a full hour in the vain hope that every minute would bring Lady Launceston to him in a more conciliatory mood, he at last in despair of any explanation taking place between them just then, set out for his promised visit to Mivart's Hotel.

"How late you are!" said Theresa as she welcomed him with one of her sweetest smiles; "I was afraid you had forgotten me, and were not coming: sit down, for I have much to say to you."

Theresa was pale, and appeared depressed. "There is no use in having any concealments from you," said she, "so I am going at once boldly to inform you of all my distresses—But first tell me how is my dear little *chaperon* of yesterday; I hope he did not catch cold, and that you were not scolded for keeping him so late—And by the bye, why were you angry with me last night? for I am sure you were——I suppose, however, I may guess," she added colouring, "and that you were not pleased at seeing Lascelles with me; but really you give too much importance to that affair."

"It is impossible to give too much importance to what concerns the fair fame of a woman—of a wife," said Trevelyan with much seriousness of manner. "You have never lived in the world of England, Lady Herbert; you have been, alas! long used to the licence of manners at present adopted on the continent, and as your *guardian* I really feel bound to warn you of your danger."

"Well, really," said Theresa laughing, "your English world appears to be a little unfair; it says nothing to a man who, without any restraint, any excuse, amuses himself as he pleases; but a woman, it seems, is not allowed the most harmless recreation."

"Harmless! do you call it?" said Trevelyan.

Digitized by Google

"Yes, surely harmless," she continued, with eagerness, "where no feeling of the heart is engaged—when, indeed, every feeling, every thought, is engrossed by—" Her voice faltered, and she stopped.

"Then, dear Lady Herbert, if there is no feeling in the case, why risk your reputation—why involve yourself in difficulties for which there can be no compensation? —indeed, allow me to add, no excuse. Why permit a young man, no way connected with you, to be always at your side?"

"Merely *pour passer le tems*," replied Theresa in a careless tone—"for, believe me," she continued, but in a totally altered manner;—"believe me I have that within me which will ever secure me from all such dangers as I see you apprehend for me. A woman never loves twice —not at least as I have loved—as for my torment I still love—and such an affection makes her whole soul revolt at the bare idea of that which would not only degrade herself, but the sentiment on which she exists. And that solitary sentiment is all that is now left to me.—Oh! Colonel Trevelyan, even *you* do not know me! Even *you* are still not aware that, when you see me thus playing the part of a gay, hardened, worldly flirt, I am then most wretched;—and that at the very instant that you are condemning me for my unprincipled levity, I am merely endeavouring, by a momentary intoxication of spirits, to banish from my mind feelings and recollections which, if given way to, might drive me, in desperation, to be—what you suspect I am—but at which my very nature shudders. Lascelles is nothing more to me," she continued, with a wild vehemence of manner, "than a tool which may be of use in at last rousing my husband's feelings towards me—if indeed there are still any left. I have tried kindness—I have tried forbearance—meanness even—I will now try what effect the dread of injured honour may produce."

"Theresa, beware!" cried Trevelyan; "it is a dangerous game to play. Many have tried it, but have always been worsted in the attempt. And if your *own* feelings are so much under control, how can you answer for those

Digitized by Google

of another? How can you be sure you will ever command respect from one to whom you give every encouragement?"

"Leave that to me," said Theresa, with quickness; "Lascelles no more dare go beyond that line of demarcation which I have in my own mind laid down, than he dares make love to your pattern wife. And, by the bye," she continued, her eyes flashing fire, "I spoke to her last night—I went up to her with the most cordial proffers of renewed friendship—but I saw the proud look of conscious superior virtue in her cold countenance.—I saw plainly that she felt there would be contamination even in my touch. But I laugh at all that—I can look an unjust, suspicious world as boldly in the face as Lady Launceston herself. My honour is as unsullied, as spotless—and I care no more for her insulting treatment than for the world's condemnation—for I merit neither. It was for *your* sake, Colonel Trevelyan, that I last night made those advances to her. For your sake I bore with the affronting, repulsive rudeness of her manner. I even went so far as to pay court to her, I talked to her of you—of her children—of our former intimacy—but nothing would move her—and I can do no more; if we are to be foes, it is not my fault: I have done my part, and any future advances must now come from her—for I cannot lower myself so far as to sue for the protection of one who, after all, does not stand one inch higher in the scale of moral rectitude than myself.—No, not even so high," she added, with an exulting smile; "for what have been *her* trials, compared to mine? What has *she* had to bear, in comparison with what I have endured?"

In thus giving vent to her feelings, Theresa had been betrayed into a violence of manner which Trevelyan had never before witnessed in her, but, suddenly composing herself, she resumed. "This, however, is not the subject on which I had meant to have talked to you; and I have been wrong in giving way to such foolish irritation. If I have expressed myself too strongly, or improperly, pray forgive me," said she, in a softened voice, and with a subdued look. "I am sure I should be the most un-

Digitized by Google

grateful of wretches, if I ever voluntarily, or knowingly, said, or did, a thing to hurt *you*. But *your* wife, thus rejecting—scorning me! it was *that* I could not bear,"—and tears forced themselves into her eyes. "But I will try and forget it all," she added, "for really such things are not worth my anger—and now listen to my story:—

"Herbert came home yesterday evening from Ascot in high spirits, having, it seems, won a great deal of money: he directly discharged an awkward debt we had incurred; and that done, he said he had resolved on directly setting off for his father's in Scotland. I could but approve of his intention; indeed felt that he should not, perhaps, have delayed his journey so long.—Well—I had returned from Richmond *quite good*, as your little boy says. The sight of dear Treevy had somehow revived in me all my long-forgotten better feelings, and I resolved to bury the past in oblivion, and to endeavour to commence a new life of domestic cordiality, if not of such happiness as I had once fondly flattered myself might be mine. I accordingly proposed to Herbert to accompany him to Scotland. He directly made all sorts of difficulties; but I patiently obviated every one of them, and said I was willing to set out that very minute; that I would travel as he pleased, if he would only agree to my going with him. He still objected, saying nothing would be more ill-judged than our attacking his father *en masse*; that I must be well aware that we had for long been in disgrace, and that the utmost prudence would, consequently be necessary.

"I reminded him how particularly kind Lord Falkirk had ever been to me (which was true;) how much better I suited him than he did himself, and that, as I had not been the culprit in those offences respecting money-matters which had been the cause of his displeasure, I should be the best negotiator in the affair. Herbert, however, only laughed at my proposal, and persisted in his determination to face his father alone, as he well knew, he said, that my thoughtless imprudence would only make matters worse. I then suggested that I might be left at the nearest inn for a time. I represented in the strongest

Digitized by Google

terms my friendless, solitary situation here. I entreated —*implored*, I might remain under his protection. He coarsely ridiculed my sudden affectation of propriety; wondered what new whim I had in my head, and bade me not tease him with such nonsense. Again and again I returned to the charge, till at last wearied, I suppose, by my importunities, he gave full vent to his passion, and fiercely pushing me from him—darted out of the room.—I saw him no more—and he is gone—alone —to Scotland."

As Theresa uttered these last words she started from her seat, as if to endeavour by bodily motion to check the agitation of her mind. In so doing, the guitar, which she had apparently been new stringing, and which was hanging on the back of her chair, was thrown down and vibrated on the ground—its sounds seemed to make her shudder. Trevelyan, who well knew the feelings which they must have excited, instantly rose from his seat to lift up the fallen instrument; as he approached her for that purpose, she held out her hand to him—"Forgive me" said she, in a low broken voice; "I shall soon have done with my tiresome story, and when I have once told you all, I promise you not again to torment you in this manner. I know it is not fair; but I have not a friend on earth but you."—These last words were scarcely audible through her sobs.

"Compose yourself, dearest Theresa," said Trevelyan —himself scarcely less agitated—and fetching her a glass of water from her dressing-table, he with a trembling hand held it towards her. As she extended her's to take it the loose sleeve of her wrapping-gown fell back, and he recognised on her arm the gold bracelet which he had given her the morning of her wedding-day. The ornament instantly caught his attention, and as she returned him the glass, his eyes were involuntarily again riveted upon it, while the recollection of the feelings with which he had placed it there on that fatal day, rushed on his soul with overwhelming force.

Theresa soon observed the object which had attracted his attention, and looking in his face with a melancholy

Digitized by Google

smile which went to his heart—"Ah, do you remember that bracelet?" said she; "that was your wedding present to me! You put it there yourself the day I was married—and there it has remained ever since.—You don't know what a valuable gift it has proved to me, for it has really acted the part of a talisman; the sight of it often checking me in the midst of my follies, by recalling all the excellences of the kind donor: in short, I have quite a superstitious feeling about this bracelet, and should be sure some dreadful misfortune was hanging over me were I ever to lose it."

How rapidly did those words make poor Trevelyan's heart beat; and how ardently did he long to press to it that lovely hand and arm which seemed to be thus in a manner marked as his own property. He stood for a minute entranced; then, making a violent effort over his feelings, he hastily retreated to his former seat on the opposite of the writing-table.

"Well now," said Theresa drying her eyes, "if you have still patience to listen to me, I will go on with my sad tale, promising to make it as brief as possible.

"When we first arrived here we had not a farthing, indeed we could not have reached London had it not been for Lascelles."

"Good God!" exclaimed Trevelyan in an agony of alarm, "why did you not tell me this before?"

"Be quiet," said Theresa, smiling at his vehemence; "all that is settled. Herbert immediately on his return from Ascot last night paid that, and other former debts, to Lascelles; and most thankful I am he did so—and he had still enough of his winnings left to take him to Scotland: of this I am certain, as it was on hearing the flourishing state of his purse that I directly formed the plan of accompanying him. I was in such a state of irritation after he had thus cruelly left me,—so entirely engrossed by that one feeling,—that I thought of nothing else, and it was not till he was actually gone, that my helpless—destitute—situation struck me; for," said she, taking her purse out of her bag, and playfully tossing it in the air—"I have not, you see, one sous left."

Digitized by Google

"This is a ridiculous, artificial sort of distress," added she laughing, "being of course merely owing to the peculiar circumstances in which we have been, and are still, placed; but nevertheless *cela ne laisse pas d'être* very awkward and disagreeable for the moment. I know that Herbert went the instant we arrived in London to Lord Falkirk's banker, but of course he could get nothing there, as strict orders had long since been given that none of his drafts should be answered.

"As for my own money," she continued, "I really do not know what has become of it, except that I suspect the interest it should produce has long been forestalled; in short the truth is, since Herbert took to this unfortunate amusement of gaming, he is one day rich, and pennyless the next, having scarcely ever any thing he can call his own; and how we live the Lord knows!—Now I have two favours to ask of you: one is, that you will speak to the man of the hotel, and try and make some bargain for me while I remain here; for neither Herbert nor I ever thought of anything of the sort, and I suspect he is charging us at a most unconscionable rate. Then could you try and find out for me the state of affairs with regard to the interest of my own money? I have no scruple in asking all this of you," said she with a most winning smile; "I have received so many favours at your hands that one more or less makes little difference in the enormous debt of gratitude I owe you. Nor do I any more scruple in accepting from you any immediate pecuniary assistance,—which will of course be but a loan,—for Herbert seems quite satisfied that, as soon as he has seen his father, has begged pardon, and promised to be good in future, his former allowance will be renewed, and then all will do well."

"And are you then going to remain here, alone, while your husband is away?" enquired Trevelyan with painful anxiety.

"Why yes, to be sure, for where can I go?" said Theresa in a melancholy tone;—"I assure you I feel sorely the desertion, and awkwardness, of my situation; friendless, and I may say a total stranger, here in Lon-

Digitized by Google

don; and, oh! how joyfully would I have risked any inconvenience, any fatigue, anything in short, if Herbert would have agreed to my accompanying him—But,"—and again tears started into her eyes,—"I verily believe my society is become hateful to him; or at least so indifferent, that he does not care what becomes of me."

She paused a minute, and then looking reproachfully in Trevelyan's face,—"Now that you know all this, judge whether it was the love of pleasure that took me last night to D—— House; it was, on the contrary, despair!—I felt that anything would be better—safer, indeed, for me, than my own thoughts!—I could not get Richmond, and all the recollections to which the sight of that my first happy home had given rise, out of my head, and willing to prolong such delightful feelings, I, as soon as we had parted, set to work to new string this guitar, and was still endeavouring to recall all our old favourite Richmond songs, when Herbert arrrived: my whole heart was in these former days of happiness!" . . . . .

She stopped for a moment, big tears rolling almost unconsciously to herself, down her cheeks.

"You know what followed," she continued wildly; "the contrast between the past and the present was too much to bear.—Oh, why was that peaceful happiness ever disturbed?—Why for my misery did Herbert and I ever meet?—and why was I then so fatally blinded to what would have been my real happiness!—for *you* would have been ever kind to me.—*You* would ever have been at least a friend, a counsellor, to the poor deserted Theresa,—and Heaven knows how much she now stands in need of both."

As Theresa uttered these words, her head sunk on the table before her, and extending her arm towards Trevelyan, she convulsively grasped his hand.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER V.

Oh! that what once I was in name,
  I now in act could be!
The guardian of thy peace, thy fame,
  Thy faith and purity!

That I had still the right to urge
  What might awake a fear!
Thy bark is on the whirlpool's verge—
  I must not—dare not steer. *Old Song.*

A MAN at forty may be considered past the age of those sudden ebullitions of passion which for the time overthrow the reason; of

"Hasty love soon blown to fire."

But it is, perhaps, the very period in his life at which the strong sentiment of long-tried affection exercises most power over his soul. When Trevelyan felt his hand thus pressed by her who had been so long the constant, though unacknowledged idol of his heart, it became as if palsied in her grasp. His whole frame shook with violent and contending emotions!—He dared not move—he dared not speak—and, for a minute, he nearly forgot those sacred ties by which they were each bound to another. In this mental conflict, his hand still trembling within Theresa's, he applied for a strength greater than his own—and his prayer was heard.

"Theresa," said he at length, in a solemn voice, "I am still that friend—that counsellor; look on me as——your father!—and in that sacred name and character allow me to claim an authority over you, which may still save you from destruction and despair. There is no use," he continued, with much agitation, "in now recurring to the past; Heaven knows, such recollections are as

Digitized by Google

torturing to me as to yourself; but if you will be guided by one whose happiness is but too much involved in yours, I will still insure you peace and content. Time, reflection, and the disappointment in which such pursuits as those to which your husband is now devoted never fail to end, will again restore him to you; but you, on your part, must take care to deserve his returning affections, and not vainly seek to reclaim him by means which can only involve yourself in ruin. He will not now be long absent; I need not say that I will during that time be of all the use and comfort to you I can; and I have a plan to propose, which will at once extricate you from all your present difficulties. Spend the time of Lord Herbert's absence in Scotland, with my sister at Richmond. I am sure her reception of you yesterday cannot have left a doubt on your mind as to her feelings towards you, and her *more* than willingness to receive you again under her roof.—Oh, Theresa, I implore you, return again to that home where you say you were once so happy!"

Trevelyan now again ventured to look earnestly in her face, and to return the pressure of that dear hand which had still remained locked in his. Theresa sat for an instant silent, her eyes fixed on the ground; at length, in a dejected tone, she said, "I dare say,—I allow, your advice is good; and at all events your proposal is most kind. But"—and she hesitated—"but—I fear, at this moment—I have engagements."

"Engagements!" repeated Trevelyan with eagerness, "and with whom?"

"Don't be alarmed," said Theresa, smiling through her still remaining tears; "*only* with Mrs. Lindsay."

"And who is this Mrs. Lindsay," said Trevelyan, "with whom you seem to have so much intercourse?"

"Why, really, as to *who* she is, I can hardly tell; we fell in with her and her husband at Naples, among many others, all travellers like ourselves; but they were more lucky than we were, for they reached home in time, and Colonel Lindsay is now again abroad with our army; however, I really cannot pretend to much knowledge of my friend, nor should I say that I altogether like or ap-

Digitized by Google

prove of her—*mais que voulez vous;* there is not another being in the whole world of London who has shown me the smallest kindness; not another who has held out to me the hand of friendship, or even of common civility. Besides," she continued, after a moment's pause, "as to going to Richmond, I fear I am not good enough for your sister; she was most kind to me during the short time I was with her, because she knew not what a different being I am from herself; and then the sight of her extraordinary goodness and piety had such an effect upon me, that I was myself for the moment a different person, and really felt ready to become a saint also—a *sœur de la charité*—in short, a pattern of all that is right—but I fear the good fit is gone off," said she with a sigh; "and I shrink from the idea of the excellent, pious Treevey seeing me *de plus près*. But I will drive down again to her some morning very soon, and there is no saying," added she, smiling, "what a second visit may do for me; in the mean time, however, I will really be guided by you, if you will undertake so troublesome a charge. Your bracelet shall still be a check to my follies, and I will amuse myself here with my guitar, and my old Richmond recollections, and keep out of mischief as much as I can." So saying, she took the instrument from the back of the chair, and throwing the ribbon across her shoulders, she swept her hand over the strings, and began that same Neapolitan barcarola which had acted so important a part in her history!

There is nothing which possesses to such a degree as music the mysterious power of recalling former scenes. While Trevelyan sat entranced on once again hearing that rich melodious voice whose tones had so often lulled his soul in rapture, the past all rushed on his mind; again he felt the soft air of those balmy summer evenings during which he had skimmed along the Thames with Theresa at his side; the splash of his oar seemed to his imagination to unite with the notes of the guitar, and he again thought he beheld her innocent sparkling countenance and heard her joyous laugh; but after a few bars the

Digitized by Google

voice of the gay songstress became uncertain;—it suddenly ceased entirely, and Theresa burst into tears!

Trevelyan sat for some time, his face covered with his hand, a dead pause ensuing. At last he abruptly rose from his seat. "Lady Herbert," said he, purposely avoiding looking at her—"I will leave you now, and endeavour to do all you wish. I will make the necessary arrangements with the master of the hotel, and will directly inquire into the state of your affairs at the banker's; in the mean time here is some of your *own* money in advance," and he laid before her a draught for two hundred pounds; "and be of good cheer," he added; "all will yet be well."—Poor Trevelyan's countenance, however, at the moment ill seconded his words, and his assumed cheerfulness reached not the heart of her whom it was intended to encourage. He stood a minute by Theresa—he took her hand—and then, relinquishing it even more quickly than he had seized it, he hastily left the room.

Trevelyan spent the whole of that morning busily engaged in Theresa's affairs, and feeling himself under present circumstances to be totally unequal to encountering his wife in a *tête-à-tête*, he wrote her a note, begging she would not wait dinner for him, as he found he should be oblighed to be early at the House, and would therefore dine at his club. From that same club he wrote Theresa a detailed account of the state of her affairs, as he thought it most prudent to discuss these domestic matters in that manner, and not expose himself to the dangers of another such interview. Many a plan did he during that day form for her future good and comfort, but as in each of them Augusta's co-operation was necessary, the conviction of her immoveable obstinacy obliged him to relinquish them one after another as soon as conceived, and left him in the same state of doubt and apprehension.

When Lord and Lady Launceston met at breakfast the following day, not a word was said by either with reference to their conversation on the preceding. There was perhaps an additional chill of reserve in Augusta's manner, but it was a something which Trevelyan *felt*

Digitized by Google

rather than could have defined, and to an indifferent observer she would probably have appeared precisely the same as usual. The children were fortunately that morning in peculiarly high spirits, and Augusta luckily did not as usual check their mirth.

At last, when the servants had left the room, she said, in a most decided tone, "As to-day is Friday—which you may have forgot—I am going to send most of the things to Cheshunt, and as Hitchcock says she can manage very well here for one night without Louisa and Freddy's beds, I shall send them also to-day, and intend to go with the children myself to-morrow,—to remain."

Trevelyan looked quickly into his wife's face, for he directly guessed at the true reason for this sudden departure into the country; feeling certain that she had resolved upon it in order to avoid the possibility of any further intercourse with Theresa. Expostulation would however, he knew, be vain, and peremptory commands pretty nearly as useless, besides being what he never wished to have recourse to; he could, therefore, only acquiesce in her determination, hoping that time and reflection would bring her to better feelings on the subject.

Before the conclusion of breakfast, a note was delivered to Trevelyan, which instantly brought all the blood into his face as he recognized Theresa's well-known hand. On opening it he read as follows:—

"This is so delicious a day, I am going to drive down (*alone*) to Richmond—have you any commands? You see the power of the bracelet! I intend to return early, for I dine with Mrs. Lindsay at five, as we are going to the Play. I suppose you would not do so frisky a thing as join us there.

"Yours, T. L."

Trevelyan read this note over several times, for strong was the temptation to accede to Theresa's proposal for the evening; still stronger, perhaps, that of accompanying her to Richmond. But he resisted both; and regretting it was not in his power to accept her invitation to

Digitized by Google

the Play, he merely thanked her for her offer, and for her intended visit to his sister. When he put this answer into the servant's hand he felt better satisfied with himself than for several days past; and when, on the following morning, he accompanied Lady Launceston to her carriage on her departure for Cheshunt, he looked her more boldly in the face, and embraced his children, in particular the dear little St. Ives, with freer feelings of tenderness.

Although thus left master of the field, Trevelyan was so well aware of the danger of frequent intercourse with one who he could not disguise to himself still retained too much of her former power over his affections, that he felt he could not venture to turn his liberty to any account in the protection of the deserted Theresa. Yet how avoid the trial altogether without abandoning to her fate the helpless being whom he had sworn to protect, and who had no friend on earth but himself?

During this period of voluntary banishment, he twice accidentally fell in with her. Each time she was in Mrs. Lindsay's company; each time Lascelles was in attendance, and each time the blush which tinged her face avowed the consciousness of deserving her guardian's censure. He however said nothing to her with regard to her conduct. It was vain to bid her choose her society better, when she in fact had no choice. It was equally vain to expect she would consent to live in total solitude. She was banished from *his* home, which might have been to her a safe asylum, and principle forbad him offering to supply the place of those from whom he wished her to separate. Whenever chance thus threw them together, her pleasure at seeing him was most unfeigned, and whenever her eyes met his they still seemed to speak the language of rectitude and sincerity, as if the sight of him immediately recalled the better feelings of her heart. How hard to be forced to repulse one who appeared to cling to him as her only refuge from evil; and whose well-being was dearer to him than his own existence!

The Whitsuntide holidays soon after followed, and as Trevelyan could not—even to himself—plead his attend-

Digitized by Google

ance on the House as a pretext for remaining in town, and had no other possible excuse for absenting himself from home, he joined his family at Cheshunt.

The domestic happiness of Lord and Lady Launceston had never in its best days been such as his warm heart had once pictured to himself, or such as to allow of any diminution; and the events of the last fortnight had not certainly tended to increase their enjoyment of each other's society. The small degree of confidence which had ever existed between them—even on matters least connected with the heart and feelings—seemed to be now totally destroyed; for there was not a subject, however trifling, however matter-of-fact, which did not somehow appear to be connected with, and to end in, Theresa. An additional silence and reserve on both sides, was therefore the natural result of this state of affairs; and the very placidity of temper which with the one was the consequence of her inflexible obstinacy, and with the other the effect of principle and self-control, added to their estrangement, by establishing a sort of *false* intercourse between them.

Lady Launceston had, during the Whitsun-week, invited some of the family connexions to the house; and for the first time Trevelyan hailed their presence with joy, as an interruption to a most irksome *tête-à-tête;* nor was it without real additional pleasure that he learned from the "*clever apothecary,*" when enumerating his patients, that Cheshunt was not above eight or nine miles distant from the present residence of his friend Sir Henry Williams. Immediately on making this joyful discovery, Trevelyan mounted his horse, and set off in search of his Twickenham acquaintance, whom he had not seen for above a twelvemonth. In the course of conversation, he naturally informed Sir Henry of Theresa's return to England, and the warm-hearted old General, quite delighted to hear of her safety after all the alarms on her account, said he would, the very first time he was in town, make a point of calling on his friend's daughter; and only regretted that the present very delicate state of Lady Williams's health made it equally out of the question that she should visit Lady Herbert in London, or

Digitized by Google

invite her and her husband to their house in the country.

"Are matters going on pretty well in that *ménage?*" said Sir Henry—for Trevelyan's manner, when talking of Theresa, had unconsciously and unintentionally betrayed a degree of anxiety about her, which had directly awakened Sir Henry's suspicions.

"Oh! yes—certainly—I hope so," say Trevelyan quickly. "But Lord Herbert is just now in Scotland, and Lady Herbert, from knowing no one in London, naturally feels herself in a very uncomfortable and solitary situation."

"Why in the world, then, don't she joint you at Cheshunt?"

Trevelyan did not answer.

"Do the ladies not take to each other, hey?" said the cunning old soldier. "I suppose Lady Launceston smells a rat—for women are so deuced jealous, that they are not content with our esteem, admiration, approbation, and all that sort of thing, at the *present* time, but require us to have kept our hearts and eyes locked up in cages all the former part of our lives, waiting for them, forsooth!—And so this is the truth of the story!—a little jealousy, hey?"

Sir Henry said this in a light tone of raillery, but on looking at Trevelyan he soon saw by the expression of his countenance that it was no jesting matter. "Poor fellow!" said he, as he kindly put his hand on Trevelyan's shoulder, "that guardianship of his daughter was a bad hit of my friend Howard's. Well do I remember that dreadful wedding-day at Richmond!—I assure you it was long before I could get you out of my head; but still, so many years having gone by, I had hoped you—like other men—had quite got over that affair. Is she still handsome?"

Trevelyan did not reply to that question, but, recurring to what Sir Henry had before said, again expressed his hope that he would call upon Lady Herbert; and having obtained Sir Henry's promise on that point, he directly changed the conversation.

Ten long days had now elapsed, since Trevelyan had

Digitized by Google

seen Theresa, when Sir Henry Williams, who came to dine and sleep at Cheshunt, proposed that they should the next morning ride into town together, that he might pay his intended visit at Mivart's Hotel. The old Baronet was luckily, for once, too prudent to make his proposal in public, and Trevelyan unfortunately not prudent enough to object to it. They accordingly set off the following day after breakfast, but Sir William rode so slowly, and talked so much the whole way, that they did not reach Brook street till past two o'clock.

"Not at home," said the pert waiter, in answer to Trevelyan's inquiries after Lady Herbert Leslie; "her ladyship drove from the door not five minutes ago."

"Was she alone?" inquired Trevelyan: "and have you any idea where she went to?"

"No, my Lord, none," continued the provoking waiter, who appeared to have an ill-natured pleasure in being as disagreeable in his answers as possible; but upon inquiring of Theresa's servant, who was standing in the hall, Trevelyan learnt that she had gone out with Mrs. Lindsay, and it was believed to Kensington Gardens.

"Shall we walk our horses that way?" said Sir Henry; "I shall be deuced sorry not to have a look at her to-day; and as it is full sixteen miles from our house to town, and rather too long a ride for such an old fellow as I am grown, I shall not soon have another opportunity."

Trevelyan joyfully catching at the possibility of still seeing Theresa, readily agreed to this proposal, and they proceeded to the grove entrance into the gardens. There were several carriages and horses waiting outside, and, fancying he recognised Mrs. Lindsay's among them, Trevelyan proposed to Sir Henry to leave their horses there, and to take a turn in the gardens.

The beauty of the day appeared to have enticed all London to the spot; the principal walk was thronged with pedestrians, while the riders, drawn up in rows outside, were showing off their horses and persons, and flirting with their gaily bonneted acquaintances within; every creature, in short, seemed to be there, except the

Digitized by Google

one whom they sought, and they reached the next entrance into the gardens without having seen or heard anything of her, although Trevelyan anxiously inquired of every acquaintance he met, whether Lady Herbert Leslie had been seen in that direction.

"Let us go back by some quieter walk," said Sir Henry, "for I declare the crowd and the pretty ladies have made my old head quite giddy."

They accordingly struck down a less frequented and more shady part of the garden, and had again nearly reached the gate at which they had first entered, when Trevelyan's eagerly searching eye discovered two persons on a seat at some little distance, apparently engaged in very interesting conversation, for the eyes of the one were fixed on the ground, while those of the other were riveted on the countenance of his fair companion. Trevelyan's fears instantly told him it was Theresa!—and Lascelles!—and they told him but too truly.

So painful a feeling of apprehension shot through his heart at this sight, that he shrank from immediately pointing out to Sir Henry the object of their hitherto anxious search; but keeping his eyes fixed upon her, he directed their steps towards the spot. On a sudden he saw Theresa start from her seat, and look eagerly around her, evidently wishing for the approach of some other person. As her eyes quickly darted in every direction, they at last fell upon Trevelyan, and instantly recognising him, sprang towards him with an almost audible exclamation of joy. Her face was unusually suffused with colour, but whether owing to any extraordinary agitation, or to the quick pace at which she had joined them, and pleasure at thus unexpectedly meeting her father's old friend, Trevelyan could not tell; but he gazed on her expressive countenance with even more than usual interest.

Her reception of Sir Henry was most cordial. She made the kindest inquiries after Lady Williams; recalled to his memory their former jokes, and talked with such feeling of "dear Richmond," that the warm-hearted old soldier was in raptures. But still to Trevelyan, who read

Digitized by Google

her every look and feeling, there was such a degree of strange agitation in her manner, that he felt sure something unusual had happened to discompose her.

As soon as these first expressions of pleasure at meeting were over, Theresa, after casting an anxious look towards the bench she had lately quitted—and which was now empty—went close up to Trevelyan, and putting her arm within his, she said in a low voice, "Let me remain with you till I find Mrs. Lindsay; she cannot, I am sure, be far off."

Trevelyan again looked anxiously in her face, as if wishing to make those inquiries with his eyes, which he could hardly venture upon with his tongue. Again a crimson blush covered her cheeks, which had a minute before been deadly pale.

"Lady Herbert," said he to her, in a low voice; "are you not well? has any thing particular distressed you?"

"Oh, no, nothing," said she, endeavouring, though in vain, to assume a careless manner. "Nothing—a mere trifle, but,"—and she hesitated—"but Lascelles was talking nonsense to me just now—and at the moment I was rather out of sorts with him. But it is not worth mentioning—and I shall take care to let him know such *persiflage* does not please *me*, whatever it may others—and that it is never to be repeated."

Trevelyan again looked at her with increased distress and alarm.

"Don't scold me just now," said she, in a still more agitated voice, "for I am at this minute so nervous, I don't know what effect a word—or even a look, from you, might have upon me; only for heaven's sake do not leave me till I have found Mrs. Lindsay. And don't be so frightened, for, see," added she with a strange wild smile on her face, "you need be in no alarm about me; there is my talisman safe," and she pointed to his bracelet on her wrist.

Just then, luckily, Sir Henry met with an acquaintance with whom he stopped for a minute, and Theresa instantly taking advantage of the circumstance, hastily said, "Do you in truth believe, Lord Launceston, that your

Digitized by Google

sister would be willing to have me with her for a short time? If I were to write to her by this evening's post, do you think I could venture to follow my letter next day? —for I suppose I cannot receive an answer to it till to-morrow evening. I should not trespass on her kindness any farther than by asking for a few days' shelter under her roof; for you know I daily expect to hear of Herbert's return. Not that he has yet vouchsafed me one word," added she, indignantly, "although I have twice written to him."

This proposal of going to Richmond imparted a ray of hope to poor Trevelyan's mind, which was at the minute oppressed with the most alarming apprehensions. He was strongly tempted to remain in town the whole of that day: in short, whatever might be the consequences to himself, not to lose sight of Theresa until he saw her safe under his sister's protection. But he was in every way hampered. Sir Henry was his guest—they were both expected home to dinner, where other visiters were to join them—he could plead no unexpected duty at the House, no recollected engagement to account for such a sudden change of intention, and in short, he altogether felt his remaining in London that day was impossible.

He therefore turned his whole attention towards Theresa herself; he said every thing most encouraging to her with regard to his sister's reception; assured her she would be delighted at having her again as an inmate, and he concluded by promising to ride down to Richmond and see them on the following Thursday—it then being Tuesday.

"And to make your mind quite easy," added he, a sudden thought having struck him, "as I have a horse and groom in town doing nothing, I will stop in Cavendish-square now, on my way to Cheshunt, and send to apprise my sister of your intention for to-morrow; you will thereby receive her answer this very evening, so that you may go to her as soon as you please."

Theresa seemed much delighted at this arrangement, which also relieved Trevelyan from a load of anxiety about her, for he could not but feel that her safety de-

Digitized by Google

pended upon the immediate execution of this plan; and such was therefore his eagerness on the subject, that had it not been for his engagement with his companion, he would have put spurs to his horse that very minute, and himself galloped down to Richmond.

They now walked on in silence for some time, Trevelyan being too much occupied picturing to himself a thousand probable and possible dangers to Theresa, to be able to talk upon indifferent subjects; and she, on her past, seemed to have totally lost that power of rallying her spirits, which she usually possessed to such an extraordinary degree, even in the midst of the most violent emotions.

Just as they reached the gate which led into the park, Mrs. Lindsay, in company with the same young man who had expressed such admiration for her friend at D—— House, appeared.

"I am very tired," said Theresa, immediately hastening to her, "and my head aches so dreadfully, that I should really be much obliged if you would allow your carriage to take me home now, and I will send it back directly for you." Mrs. Lindsay said she would prefer accompanying her, and declaring her perfect readiness to leave the gardens, they all proceeded together towards the carriage.

"I shall not go with you to the Opera to night," said Theresa to Mrs. Lindsay, in an audible voice, as if on purpose that Trevelyan should hear her. "I am not well, and shall stay at home alone, and nurse myself, that I may be quite stout to-morrow, when I intend to go into the country."

Mrs. Lindsay remonstrated on her whims, and rallied her upon her *vapeurs*, but Theresa was firm, and with mingled feelings of pleasure and anxiety, hope and fear, Trevelyan placed her in her friend's barouche.

"You will not forget to write directly to your sister?" said she to him at parting; "and I may tell her you will positively be at Richmond on Thursday?"

"Certainly," said Trevelyan.

Theresa held out her hand to him, giving his an addi-

Digitized by Google

tional pressure on relinquishing it, to assure him that he might entirely depend upon her.

Notwithstanding this implied promise of prudence, Trevelyan remained for several minutes after Theresa's departure with his eyes still fixed upon her in anxious solicitude; and so engrossed by his thoughts, that he became totally unconscious of the presence of every one else, and was only roused from his trance by feeling somebody touch his arm; he turned hastily round, and beheld Sir Henry Williams, who laughing heartily exclaimed—"Faith, my good friend, it is not necessary that my Lady Launceston should possess any very peculiar sagacity, or keenness of nose, in order to smell the rat I hinted at; and I really cannot quite wonder at her Ladyship's jealousy. Egad, our Theresa is more beautiful than ever, and in no way Frenchified or spoilt, but the same pleasant, hearty, unaffected creature she ever was—I must say, she is a woman to turn any man's head—and I declare, I could almost fall in love with her myself."

The truth was, Sir Henry had not fallen at all in love with Augusta, whose cold, formal manners no way suited or amalgamated with his blunt-heartiness, and she had been perhaps even more than usually reserved towards him, on learning, as she did from his open communicativeness, that Theresa had, in a manner, been the original link between himself and her husband.

Trevelyan longed to give Sir Henry a hint to say nothing about this rencontre with Theresa on their return to Cheshunt, but he did not dare, for fear his very prohibition should provoke him to tell what he wished should be suppressed; and indeed he hardly liked to own to himself that there was any thing to conceal.

They mounted their horses, Trevelyan begging leave to stop for five minutes in Cavendish Square, in order to write a note to his sister.

On reaching the house, they saw a man on horseback, who appeared to be just arrived, and who had evidently ridden in great haste; the hall-door was open, and the porter, who was parleying with the messenger, instantly observing Trevelyan, hurried up to him.

Digitized by Google

"A letter, my Lord, come express from Doctor Hume at Richmond; it was lucky I saw your Lordship, for I was just going to send the man on to Cheshunt, for he says it is of importance."

A sad presentiment of ill news directly took possession of Trevelyan's mind; he hurried into the house, and with a trembling hand opened the Doctor's letter. His fears were but too well founded;—his sister was still alive, but, sudden mortification having taken place, it was feared she could not survive many hours. She was perfectly aware of her immediate danger, and expressed a strong wish to see Lord Launceston.

"Good God!" exclaimed Trevelyan, quite overpowered by this accumulation of painful feelings and anxieties—"My poor sister!—what shall I do?"—and holding out the letter to Sir Henry, he walked up and down the room in the greatest perturbation, hastily brushing away the tears which stole down his manly cheeks; then suddenly recollecting there was no time to be lost, he rang the bell, and ordered a hack-chaise to be immediately procured.

"Compose yourself, dear Lord Launceston," said Sir Henry, much moved at his distress; "is there any thing I can do for you? Of course I will make all the haste I can back to Cheshunt, and tell Lady Launceston what has happened."

"What will become of her!" exclaimed Trevelyan again to himself, as he still walked to and fro with hurried steps, unconscious even that Sir Henry had spoken to him—"What shall I do?" and then suddenly recollecting himself—"Oh yes, you will tell Lady Launceston; and would you also—but no—I will myself—I will write."

"*I* can write—I can, and will do any thing to serve you," repeated Sir Henry with still more earnestness, "if you will only tell me what, and to whom, I am to write?"

"Nothing—nobody," said Trevelyan hastily—"forgive me, but this sudden shock has totally overpowered me."

"The chaise is quite ready, my Lord," said a servant, just then entering. Trevelyan held out his hand to Sir

Digitized by Google

Henry.—"God bless and comfort you," said the kind old man, as he accompanied him to the carriage, "and make yourself quite easy, for I will myself break this sad news to Lady Launceston."

Trevelyan hurried into the chaise—it set off at full speed, and in less than an hour he was at his sister's door.

But—he arrived too late!—as he drove up to the house, he saw the windows were all closed—that melancholy signal which announces that the light of life within is gone!

Her pure spirit had already fled—freed from its suffering companion in the flesh, it had joyfully returned to *Him* who gave it—to *Him* in whom she had trusted!

Trevelyan felt his sister's death most keenly. She was the last of his family; the only being with whom his mind could hold converse; and more than all perhaps,—she was a hallowed link between him and Theresa—Theresa! what would now become of her?

Trevelyan shuddered as his thoughts thus involuntary reverted to the object of his solicitude, and he contrasted the evils by which she was surrounded with the image of peace then before him. For, while he knelt by the lifeless remains of his sister and gazed on her calm countenance, he fancied he could still trace on her lips the almost unearthly expression of joy with which, in the moment of dissolution, she had looked in firm faith to her welcoming Saviour—and such were his bewildered feelings, that he was almost tempted superstitiously to invoke for the desolate Theresa the protecting care of that sainted being who while on earth had loved her with a mother's tenderness.

Trevelyan was still engrossed by these thoughts, when he was warned that it was necessary for him to leave the chamber of death, in order to make way for the heart-rending preparations for interment; he repaired to his sister's sitting-room—to that room wherein he had experienced so much of happiness and sorrow! where he fancied he still saw her mild countenance smiling on him—still heard her gentle voice. He sat down at her table. He opened her writing-book. He took the pen

Digitized by Google

still tinged with the ink she had used—and thus armed, he ventured to address Theresa in the language of affection. He first informed her of what had happened; told her that he had arrived too late to receive his sister's parting words, or that they would, no doubt, have breathed blessings on her Theresa.

The painful details of business which now necessarily devolved upon Trevelyan, detained him for two days at Richmond. On Thursday, (that very Thursday on which he had fondly hoped to have visited his sister and Theresa safe under her protecting care,) he returned to Cheshunt, having fixed on the following Saturday for the funeral, at which he was of course to be present. On his way through town into Hertfordshire, he stopped at Mivart's Hotel, where he was welcomed by the unpleasant intelligence that Lady Herbert Leslie was very unwell, and could see no one.

Much alarmed, he sent immediately for Marianne, and learned from her that "Miladi ayant reçu la nouvelle de la mort d'une amie bien chérie, elle en avait été tant affligée, qu'à force de plurer elle souffrait maintenant d'un accès de fièvre; que le medicin lui avait defendu de se lever, mais que déjà elle se sentait mieux, et même dormait dans le moment. Malgré sa maladie elle serait assurément charmée de recevoir une visite de Milord, mais n'ayant pas ferm l'œil les deux nuits passées ce serait dommage peut-être de la réveiller."

Trevelyan's fears were in some degree relieved by this report of Marianne's, and asking for writing materials, he addressed every thing most kind and soothing to Theresa. He informed her that he was to return to Richmond on Saturday morning for the funeral, but would, without fail, stop to see her that afternoon on his return to Cheshunt, and that on the Monday following he intended again to take up his residence in town for some time.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VI.

"The grave is closing; thou may'st quit the fane;
But let the rite in memory remain:
The world can do without thee for a space,
And some few tears will not deform thy face.
Bear hence the volume, doubly hallow'd now:
She would have bound its precepts on thy brow,
And if it was her cross, her trial here,
To mourn the failure of a hope so dear,
Amends may yet be made—the means employ—
Repent—and thou shalt give an angel joy."

It may easily be imagined what Trevelyan's feelings were on that melancholy Saturday when he beheld the lugubrious pomp of death collected round the door of that house which had once been to him a terrestrial paradise, and finally saw removed from it the mortal remains of her who had been to him the best, and to the poor deserted Theresa almost the *only* friend on earth.

The coffin was soon deposited in the hearse; Trevelyan, accompanied by Dr. Hume, entered the first mourning coach, Miss Trevelyan's faithful attendant Humphries, with old John and the two other domestics, followed in another, and Lord Launceston's carriage, with the blinds all closed, completed the mournful procession.

It has been often remarked how rarely among the attendants upon a funeral one sorrowing countenance betrays any feeling for the fellow creature,—possibly even a near relative or companion,—who is then borne to his last home. But no one who chanced to see those following Miss Trevelyan to the grave could have received that impression, nor, indeed, could they have beheld "the mourners who then filled the streets," and have remained themselves unmoved. Even her next door neighbour, Mrs. Hopkins, who during her life-time had certainly felt little sympathy towards her, hastily retreated from the

Digitized by Google

window, (whither she had taken her usual place of observation,) as the procession moved past her house, remarking, "How very unpleasant it was to have a funeral next door, as it forced such dismal thoughts upon one." How far it was kindliness of feeling towards her who had so long breathed the same air with herself which prompted this speech, or displeasure at Miss Trevelyan's want of consideration in thus by her own death obtruding so disagreeable a subject on the attention of her neighbours, may be doubtful, but by the tone in which the observation was made, it seemed as if the latter feeling was predominant.

When the slow funeral procession had reached the end of the paved alley, which leads from the street to the church, it was met by the clergyman—that same Mr. Rivers who had so kindly soothed the last days of the poor sufferer;—the coffin was removed from the hearse, and, followed by the sorrowing party, (old John sobbing aloud,) proceeded to the church, the clergyman reading those impressive sentences which open the solemn service of the dead. The body was then for a time deposited near the altar, while the appointed form of prayer proceeded.

It was in that very church—on that very spot where Trevelyan now gazed on the sable pall which covered his sister's lifeless remains—that he had seven years before beheld the white veiled form of Theresa Howard, when she plighted her faith to another; and to his powerfully struck imagination those years now seeming but as minutes, the *two* solemn scenes became blended in his mind into *one* of over-powering agony! Agitated, bewildered, and hardly conscious of what was passing around him, he mechanically followed the clergyman to the churchyard, where the awful burial service was finally terminated.

Many persons were, as usual, collected round the spot prepared for the interment, most of whom had benefited by the kindness or liberality of the deceased. Trevelyan heeded them not—he saw them not—his eyes being mournfully riveted on the coffin, as it was gradually lowered into the ready dug grave.

Digitized by Google

At these words, "ashes to ashes, dust to dust," and at the first dreadful sound of the crumbling earth on the coffin below, a faint cry escaped from one at a little distance, and a woman, whose form was entirely concealed beneath a large cloak and veil, was seen to sink as if fainting on a tomb-stone near which she had stood. Most of the spectators immediately collected round her, but Trevelyan, who had scarcely heard the sob which had so suddenly attracted the attention of all others present, still remained fixed to the side of the unclosed grave.

At length the mournful ceremony was concluded—the clergyman closed the book, pronounced the final blessing, and then observing a crowd to be still collected where the veiled figure had sunk on the ground, and thinking he might be of use to one either in affliction or under mental derangement, he repaired to the spot, and Trevelyan remained alone watching the earth as it gradually concealed the coffin from his sight.

Suddenly he felt his arm seized, and turning quickly round, he beheld old John.—"My Lord, my Lord!" said he drawing him hastily away, "It is Miss—it is my Lady—Lady Herbert Leslie her very self, that is fallen into a swoon."

"Lady Herbert Leslie!" repeated Trevelyan, scarcely able to take in the meaning of his words.

"Yes, indeed," continued John,—"sure enough it be she—and she is not yet comed to herself."

Trevelyan waited not for another word, but forcibly making his way through the collected crowd, he beheld indeed Theresa, pale and senseless, still lying on the wet sod of the grave. He rushed up to her, and raising her with his arm, her head fell on his shoulder, and her cold damp cheek touched his. With the help of John, and Miss Trevelyan's maid, he carried her into the vestry, followed by Mr. Rivers.

When there, kneeling by her side, Trevelyan untied her cloak, threw off her bonnet, and bathed her hands and forehead with water, seeming the while to hope that by his anxious gaze and endearing expressions he might recall her to animation. A faint colour at length tinged

Digitized by Google

her lips, she opened her eyes, and after one or two deep-drawn sighs, an hysteric flood of tears came to her relief.

Mr. Rivers, seeing Theresa thus to a degree recovered, ventured to come up to her, for her name, often in his agony of alarm repeated by Trevelyan, had made him recognise in the interesting being before him, *that* Theresa of whom he had so often heard Miss Trevelyan speak, and attributing the whole scene to the mere effect of grief at her loss, he addressed to the mourner the consolatory word of religion. She hid her face in her hands, and Trevelyan and the attendants withdrawing to a little distance, left them for a few minutes together. For some time the minister's pious words seemed only to agitate her the more, but she at length became more composed, and after listening for some time to his exhortations, she expressed a wish to return once more to her friend's house. Trevelyan judged it best not to oppose her inclinations; and drawing her arm within his, raised her from her seat, in order to depart.

As they passed the door which led from the vestry into the body of the church, she stopped. "Let me go in for a minute," said she, "it will do me good."

Trevelyan, whose heart rejoiced at all these indications of serious feeling, did not object, and they entered the church together. Theresa approached the altar, and gazed for some time with melancholy earnestness on every surrounding object, then suddenly disengaging her arm from his, she threw herself on her knees on that very spot where she had received the nuptial benediction! —Irresistibly impelled by the same feeling, Trevelyan knelt also—and if the fervent prayer of faith might always be allowed to be fulfilled on earth, what blessings would have been showered on the heart-stricken Theresa! She at length rose from her knees; and Mr. Rivers, who had not remained an unmoved spectator of the scene before him, approached her with the most benignant smile on his countenance: he pressed her hand kindly in his, and then leading her from the church, deposited her in the mourning coach which was waiting for them.

The sight of Miss Trevelyan's deserted home was most

Digitized by Google

trying to them both. Every thing remained as she had left it; but every, even inanimate object, bore that dreadful look of order and desertion belonging to recent death. *There* was the couch on which she used to lie, still placed at the same spot by the open window, round which the same flowers still bloomed,—but it was untenanted,—the cushions were unpressed,—and the shawl which used to lie over her feet, carefully folded up, was placed on the unoccupied pillow; while below the sofa, her poor disconsolate dog, with his eyes anxiously fixed on the door, was uttering low piteous moans. Theresa gazed on all these memorials of her departed friend in melancholy silence, and with that intentness by which we almost hope to bring back to our sight the object of our regrets.

Accompanied by Trevelyan, she then visited, for the last time, every apartment in the house. When they passed by the door of that which had formerly been his sitting-room, she pressed his arm, looking in his face with an expression of melancholy contrition, as if the sight had instantly recalled to her, (as it but too powerfully did to her companion,) that last day on which they had together been within its walls, when she had first acknowledged to him the secret of her heart.

And one thought quickly leading to another,—"Are you displeased with me, Colonel Trevelyan," said she, "for having come here to day? I had intended you should have known nothing about it, but I felt so strong a desire to be present at dear Treevy's funeral,—to see the last of her on earth,—to revisit *that* church——; and I thought the wish so harmless, so much more so, I fear, than most of my whims; and I was so wretched and restless alone at that horrid hotel, that I (perhaps thoughtlessly,) resolved at last on indulging myself. Nothing, however, believe me, was farther from my intentions than giving trouble, or occasioning a scene. I had no idea I should have been so much overcome, but I have been ill, and am, I suppose, in consequence weak and nervous, so forgive me if I have been the unintentional cause of one additional feeling of pain to you."

Digitized by Google

The forgiveness Theresa required for her offence of intrusion was easily granted, for she had, in truth, by her presence converted that day of pain, into one of——we will not say happiness (the very word would be an insult to Trevelyan's affectionate heart,) but of at least softened affliction.

"And now," she continued, "let me take one last look of the garden, and of that lovely Thames!"

They stood together for some time in silence by the parapet wall; then suddenly making an effort over herself, "Farewell, dear, dear, Richmond!" exclaimed Theresa, "probably for ever!" and mournfully waving her hand as if in adieu, she drew her veil over her face, and turned hastily towards the house.

Trevelyan followed her; at the door they were met by poor little Oscar, who, seeing some figure in the garden, had with the same restless, dejected look, hastened to them, in apparent search of her whom he everywhere missed; and again his piteous howls told his disappointment.

"Let me take the poor dog home with me," said Theresa, much affected; "he will really be a comfort to me, indeed a useful friend, as he will recall to my mind—what at this minute, however, I feel I shall never forget."

Of course Trevelyan could not object to the proffered asylum for his sister's little favourite, and Theresa took up the poor disconsolate animal into her arms, covering him with her cloak, as he struggled to return to that home where he still hoped to find his former mistress. She then took a most kind leave of the two faithful old domestics; and hastily springing into the carriage, she made a sign to drive on, and thus for ever quitted the sheltering home of her youth.

Trevelyan remained at Richmond a few hours after her, having still some necessary affairs to settle. Old John, liberally provided for, determined on returning to end his days in Cornwall, his native home. As for Humphries, Trevelyan had already communicated to her his wish of placing her with Theresa, could Marianne be got rid of; and as she most willingly agreed to his proposal,

Digitized by Google

it was settled she should remain on for a time with a friend at Richmond, in order to be within reach.

All was now finally arranged, and with a heavy heart Trevelyan, for the last time, crossed the threshold of his sister's house. John followed him to the outward gate, but so overpowered by his feelings that he did not attempt to assist his master into the carriage, nor even to claim a parting word of kindness. Trevelyan indeed could not himself speak; he more than once wrung the old man by the hand, and then, without trusting himself again to look on those objects to which he was bidding so painful an adieu, he hastily entered the chaise, and directed the drivers to take him straight across the country to Cheshunt.

Trevelyan sunk back into the corner of the carriage, a prey to the most gloomy thoughts. That Theresa was the object that chiefly occupied them, cannot excite surprise, and at last his anxiety to know whether she had reached home in safety, and how she was after the agitations of the morning, became so strong, that, without allowing himself further time either to investigate or endeavour to combat his inclinations, he suddenly called to the postilions, and bidding them go through London, directed them to stop at Mivart's Hotel.

It was now past eight o'clock, and by the time he reached town it became quite dark.

"Is Lady Herbert Leslie at home?" he inquired, with a degree of doubt and anxiety, for which his heart afterwards smote him.

"Yes, my Lord."

"And alone?"

"Quite alone."

Trevelyan left the carriage, and desiring it should return for him in half an hour with fresh horses, he quickly followed the waiter up stairs to Theresa's apartment. When the door first opened, and owing to the darkness she did not immediately discover who it was, she started from her seat with a look of alarm and displeasure, but the next minute recognising him, one of her loveliest smiles crossed her features, and she held out her hand beckoning to him to come in.

Digitized by Google

"This is indeed kind of you,—most kind,"—said she; and her eyes filled with tears.

Theresa was sitting at a table, an open book before her. The room was scarcely lighted by the feeble twinkling light of the parsimonious candles of an hotel. A tray, containing some untouched food, was placed near her, while Oscar, crouched at her feet, kept his eyes keenly fixed on the door, as if still meditating an escape. There was, in short, altogether a melancholy appearance of neglect and discomfort about Theresa and her apartment, which struck most painfully on Trevelyan's heart. It was evident that the book before her had been the first and only object of attention since her return home; for her bonnet, which was lying on the floor, appeared to have been just thrown off; her cloak was not yet unclasped, and her hair, which had been wetted by the water thrown on her face when she had fainted in the church, was hanging partly in long waves down her deadly pale cheeks, or was carelessly pushed back out of the way.

But all these accidents of neglected dress, which might have impaired the beauty of another, seemed but to add to her's, by imparting to it, if possible, an additional degree of interest.

As Trevelyan, his hand still held by Theresa, stood at her side, he ventured to cast his eyes on what had apparently so engrossed her attention. She immediately observed what he was looking at, and playfully laying her arm over the book as a slight blush for a minute tinged her face, "I have been guilty of a theft to-day," said she, "but I will not confess until you promise me absolution, and that I shall keep what I have taken." Trevelyan's smiles replied to her request. "See there," said she, withdrawing her arm and pointing to the title-page, on which was written Miss Trevelyan's name—"I have stolen dear Treevy's Bible."

"Trevelyan's eyes filled with tears, and he again fondly pressed the hand he still held in his.

By the date, which was of many years back, the book had evidently been long in his sister's possession, and

Digitized by Google

those passages which had either most forcibly struck her understanding, or afforded comfort to her heart, were marked by her handwriting.

"How much this Bible has been read and studied!" said Theresa, in a sorrowful tone.—"It was this book which made Treevy so good, and so happy!—but," added she with a deep-drawn sigh, "*I* hardly know where in it to look for the comfort *I* need!"—and she turned over the leaves of the sacred volume, evidently in total ignorance of its contents and powers.

Trevelyan was both shocked and affected. "Reflection and prayer, with the Divine assistance, will open to you, dearest Lady Herbert, the treasures of this book; and O may the God of Heaven send his blessing on your endeavours!"

Trevelyan's voice faltered—he suddenly relinquished her hand, and leaving her side, placed himself at the opposite end of the table. "You have eaten nothing," said he, after a silence of some minutes, and as his eyes again fell on the untasted food beside him.

"No," said she, "I cannot eat; no more can Oscar, but we shall both be better to-morrow, and by degrees I hope the poor little animal will get reconciled to me, and to my life.—I wish," added she, "I could hope to become so myself; or rather, that I had courage to reconcile my life to my wishes, by making it more like what I feel it should be.—By the by," said she, quickly, "I found a letter from Herbert on my return home this afternoon, and he talks of soon being back, although he does not name any particular day." And she drew the letter out from among the leaves of the Bible. She hastily ran her eyes over the contents, and then giving it to Trevelyan, "You may read it yourself, for there are no secrets," said she, sighing:—then in a minute continued with earnestness, "But you will see, by what he says, that I was in the right, and that he is at last roused to something like jealousy; for he bids me recollect what is due to the difference of opinion and manners in England, and not to allow my thoughtless conduct to expose him to the derision of the world. He might have put his

Digitized by Google

advice into kinder words," she added with bitterness—"but still I have now obtained a degree of hold upon him which I may turn to good account.

"And now look at *this* letter," she continued, drawing from her *sac* a small pocket-book, out of which she took a worn, half-torn piece of paper, "read *this*, and tell me whether you could have believed these two letters to have been written by, and addressed to, the same person," and she held out to Trevelyan that passionate declaration of unchangeable love which Lord Herbert had addressed to her the morning of her quitting Trevelyan Castle.

"A foolish romantic feeling," she continued, with much emotion, "made me keep that letter as a sort of precious portrait of Herbert. Heaven knows there is little resemblance now! but I preserve it still, to convince myself I am not mad,—for were it not for that proof of what he *once* was, of what I was *once* to him, I believe I should at times doubt even my own recollections and identity."

How difficult was it for Trevelyan to refrain from bitter curses on him who had so carelessly cast away such a precious gift of Heaven, as Theresa might have been to one who rightly valued her; but still more difficult, perhaps, to resist pressing to his throbbing heart, sheltering in his bosom, her—whom, had she been his own, he would have loved with such a doating affection, and would have guarded with such a watchful care, that not only the winds of "Heaven," but the sharper gales of life would have been forbidden to "visit her too roughly."

Never, perhaps, even in the days of his wildest passion for her, had Trevelyan felt so irresistibly drawn towards Theresa as at this moment, when, in addition to all those more romantic feelings, the deepest sympathy,—the most engrossing anxiety,—and the tenderest pity, for the misguided being thus struggling with her fate, filled his heart. And his trial was the greater, as in the carelessness of confiding affection she fearlessly abandoned herself to him whom she reverenced as a being of some superior order. Human nature alone could not have controlled the flood of tenderness which then made his heart beat nearly to suffocation; but Trevelyan was armed

Digitized by Google

against such attacks, by a shield which never fails those who trust to it. The struggle was indeed hard,—the allotted hour had long since elapsed,—and the carriage had been long announced, before he had resolution to tear himself away. At last eleven struck; Trevelyan started from his seat, he had still twelve miles to travel, and he was expected that evening at Cheshunt!

With a sad foreboding heart, which shrank from looking to the future, he prepared to depart. "So soon!" said Theresa, "must you go?—but I know I should not detain you, and again a thousand thanks for this kind, most well-timed visit. I cannot tell you the comfort it has been to me, and as soon as you are gone, I will try and sleep, that I may forget every thing, for I somehow feel so low, so desolate to-night!" and with a nervous shudder, she looked round on the gloom of her apartment, as if the melancholy scenes of death which she had witnessed in the morning, had left a sort of superstitious horror on her imagination.

Twice did poor Trevelyan under some pretext return, —twice he grasped her hand in his—at length, conscience-stricken, shocked at his weakness, he tore himself from her, and hurrying into his carriage, returned to Cheshunt.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VII.

"'Twas but a moment that she stood,
Then sped as if by death pursued;
But in that moment o'er her soul
Winters of memory seem'd to roll;
And gather in that drop of time
A life of pain, an age of crime."

According to his intentions Trevelyan returned to town that following Monday, and remained there some days, but his time being much taken up with necessary business, both public and private, he saw little of Theresa, and was forced to acknowledge to himself that the less he did see of her the better; for notwithstanding all his endeavours to check the feelings of his soul, he often started with horror at himself when conscious of their real nature, and aware that, under the self-deceiving excuse of fulfilling a solemn promise to her father, he was on the point of breaking a still more sacred vow to another.

Once, and but once, therefore, while now alone in town, Trevelyan called on Theresa at so early an hour as to be sure of finding her; for his very liberty made him suspicious of himself, and when absent from Augusta his sense of duty had more power over him than she herself when present; her manners and character being unfortunately calculated to chill, rather than occupy and interest his feelings. During that one interview, Theresa reproached him in most moving terms for his neglect; for never coming near her, and for performing so ill the part of guardian which he had promised to resume; but her conversation was chiefly relative to her husband, from whom she had never again heard, and she still confessed her imprudent follies in so frank and artless a manner, that Trevelyan again felt satisfied that whatever might be Lascelles' iniquitous intentions, he had not, at least as

Digitized by Google

yet, succeeded in destroying her better feelings, or injuring the purity of her heart.

The same private business, which had so much engrossed his time in town, at length obliged Trevelyan to repair to Cornwall, where he was detained a full fortnight. At the expiration of that period he hurried back with the greater speed, on hearing from Augusta that little St. Ives was very unwell.

In general he did not much attend to his wife's histories of nursery indispositions; but when St. Ives was the sufferer, he more readily took alarm; and besides, in this case there seemed to be, even from the doctor's report, every reason for apprehending real danger. In his way through town, while his horses were changing, Trevelyan stopped in Brook Street; but Theresa was out; Marianne was likewise from home, so he could learn nothing respecting her beyond what he gathered from the waiter—"that Lady Herbert Leslie was quite well, and that she was, he believed, expecting his Lordship every hour." He left a few words to tell her of his anxiety about his boy, and then proceeded to Cheshunt.

The continued state of alarm in which he then remained for several days, in consequence of St. Ives' illness, occupied his mind to the exclusion of almost every other object, and, for the time, Theresa seemed to be forgotten by Augusta as well as by himself.

While thus united in one common feeling of anxiety, and constantly brought together by the couch of their sick child, a greater degree of cordiality and kindliness, both of feeling and manner, were re-established between Lord and Lady Launceston than had for some time existed; for although (and particularly of late) Augusta had appeared to be less fond of St. Ives than of her other children, yet his present danger seemed to have roused every feeling of which she was capable, and if not in general a fond mother, she was at least an attentive one, often indeed blaming her husband for what she considered to be culpable carelessness on his part, when he would not enter into these little details about the

Digitized by Google

children on which she piqued herself, but of which she had in truth sickened him.

At last the child so far recovered that all immediate anxiety was at an end, and Trevelyan, who longed to know something of Theresa, resolved to ride to town the next day in search of her. But that next day was so fine, and little St. Ives so wonderfully better, that the doctor gave permission for him to leave the house; and his petitions to papa to give him a drive in the open carriage were so urgent and moving that it was impossible to refuse him. The expedition to town was in consequence again deferred; and with all his affectionate solicitude about Theresa, Trevelyan could not regret the delay when he saw the good which his little invalid derived from the refreshing air, and the pleasure which the drive afforded him.

"Where is the pretty lady?" inquired the child,—his mind in unconscious association recurring to their former drive to Richmond;—"St. Ives would like so much to have another nice game of romps with her."

"So you shall, dear boy," said his father, smiling kindly on him as he imprinted a fond kiss on his little faded cheek, "for I know you love the pretty lady, and she loves you."

The child prattled on gaily in the enjoyment of returning health, and Trevelyan, who was himself scarcely less exhilarated by the expedition than his patient, felt altogether in better spirits than for a long time past.

He was that evening sitting at dinner with a few friends, when, unobservedly to him, Griffiths the butler was suddenly called out of the room, and, on his return, he laid down on the table, by Trevelyan, a crumpled note, informing him that it had come express from Welwyn, two posts from London on the north road.

Who is blessed with such stout nerves as not to feel his very heart turn sick at the sound of an express?—In Trevelyan's startled ears, with the fresh recollection of his feelings on receiving that which announced his sister's death, the word rang like a knell. With a trembling hand he seized the note:—the direction was scarcely

Digitized by Google

legible, but through the blots, and evident shaking of the hand which had traced it, he with feelings of agony recognized that of Theresa!—He broke the seal, and, as well as his giddy head allowed, read these words:—

"For God's sake come to me! I can tell you nothing now, but you shall know all—in pity come and save me!"

There was no signature, no date; but he could not for a minute mistake the writer.

Trevelyan turned faint,—a cold sweat covered his brow,—and desiring the butler to tell Lady Launceston he had gone out to speak to some one on particular business, he hastily rose from his seat and left the room.

Luckily for Trevelyan, Augusta was not the sort of person to take any alarm at so sudden a disappearance. The butler's story of a person having come to speak to my Lord, satisfied all present, and no one followed him.

When Trevelyan entered the hall, he saw the post-boy who had brought the note, standing at the door; but he could obtain no further information from him. His mistress, the landlady of an inn at Welwyn, had given it to him, desiring him to make all possible speed, and telling him he was to be paid at his return.

"What travellers are now in your house?" enquired Trevelyan.

He could not tell.

"How far is it to Welwyn?"

"Full fifteen miles across the country, and an awkward enough road to hit," replied the man.

Trevelyan, fearful that he might attract observation, sent the messenger to the stables; and giving orders that his own horse should be immediately got ready, he repaired to the library, and wrote the following note to Augusta, desiring Griffiths to give it to her as soon as he should be gone.

"I have just received a letter which obliges me instantly to leave home. Do not, however, be alarmed, for I trust it is nothing of importance, and that I shall be back again in a very few hours.

"LAUNCESTON."

Digitized by Google

Trevelyan then hastily changed his dress, and hurrying to the stables, he in a few minutes set off at full speed for Welwyn, accompanied by his guide.

It was dusk before they reached their destination. Trevelyan flung himself off his foaming horse as soon as he reached the inn door, and having fortunately, notwithstanding his excessive perturbation, retained sufficient presence of mind not to name Theresa, he immediately desired to speak to the landlady, and enquiring of her whether the person who had sent an express to Cheshunt was still in the house, begged that her maid might be sent to him.

"The lady has no maid with her," said the landlady: "she is quite alone."

"Quite alone!" repeated Trevelyan with increasing agitation: "Where is she?"

"I conclude I speak to Lord Launceston," continued the woman, after having attentively eyed him for a minute. "Will your Lordship be pleased to walk this way?" And so saying she led him up stairs, and along one or two low dark passages towards the back of the house, when, pointing to a door, and saying, "Your Lordship will find the young lady in that room," she left him.

Trevelyan stopped for a minute to take breath. No sound whatever proceeded from the apartment, and with a trembling hand he knocked at the door. A dog's low bark, which he instantly recognized to be that of Oscar, alone answered him. This circumstance, however, trivial as it was, gave him an undefinable sensation of comfort, as he felt the familiar sound to be a sort of warrant of Theresa's safety. He gently opened the door—and so gently that his entrance did not seem to have been perceived by a person who was sunk in a chair at the further end of the room. But another louder bark of Oscar, suddenly rousing her, Theresa raised her head, and uttering a heart-rending shriek, was in an instant extended on the floor before him.

"Theresa, Theresa, dearest-beloved, what does all this mean? Oh, speak to me—for God's sake speak to

Digitized by Google

me?" cried Trevelyan, as trembling with alarm he endeavoured to raise her from the ground.

"No, I will not move—I will not—I cannot rise, till you promise to believe me," said she wildly, "for I am innocent—I am innocent—I take Heaven to witness I am innocent! Oh, believe me, and save me!"—And she wrung her hands in agony.

"I will,—I must, believe every word you utter, Theresa;—*you* whom I have ever found to be truth itself.—But I conjure you, relieve me from the dreadful apprehensions to which your words, and the situation in which I now find you, have given rise.—For God's sake, what has happened?"

Still Theresa hid her face in her trembling hands, as if unable to look at him. "Open your whole heart fearlessly to me, dearest," cried Trevelyan, "and repose that trust in me which I solemnly swear I have in you."

"Blessings on you for those words!" she exclaimed with vehemence, and seizing his hand she kissed it in a passion of gratitude; then rising from her knees, she ventured to encounter his eyes, but the very first glance at his anxious countenance seemed too much for her agitated nerves, and uttering a faint cry she sank senseless on his breast.

Poor Trevelyan, nearly as much overpowered as herself, knew not what to do. With difficulty he replaced her in the arm-chair in which she had before been seated, and moving it towards the window, threw up the sash. He then looked anxiously round the room for something with which to revive her, and at last finding a carafe of water, he endeavoured to make her swallow a few drops, and bathed her temples and hands. By degress she came to herself; and as soon as she was in a state to be spoken to, he entreated her to allow him to fetch the landlady, that she might administer something composing. "Oh no, no! do not leave me," said she, again grasping his hand with earnestness; "have patience with me; I shall be better soon, and then I will tell you all—But indeed, indeed I am innocent!"—she again exclaimed with an-

Digitized by Google

guish in her countenance, as the big tears rolled down her face.

Trevelyan thought it best to leave her a little to herself to recover, and sitting down by her, he remained for some time in silence, holding her hand in his, and gazing on her still agitated face with looks of the tenderest compassion. By degrees her sobs subsided, and after two or three ineffectual attempts, she at length, in an incoherent manner, gave the following account of the circumstances which had led to her present situation.

"My head feels so strangely confused," said she, "that I fear I shall not be able to tell you all that has happened regularly, but I will try. Herbert, you know, at last returned—I forget, now, when—I was overjoyed at seeing him. I went, as you know, about the world, probably every one thought in search of amusement—but it was merely to get over the time during his absence; for one only thought occupied me—how I might reclaim him, how once again win him back. All that you had said, (carelessly as I might have appeared to listen at the time,) had made a deep impression, and I resolved to try what kindness and affection alone would accomplish. When therefore he at length came back, I did not endeavour to conceal the delight which his presence occasioned me: but, alas!—he showed little in return!"——

She stopped a minute, and then seemingly collecting her bewildered thoughts,—"I now remember," she continued, "that it must have been yesterday that he arrived —only yesterday! and yet here am I! . . . . .

"But I will endeavour to go on regularly.—We were going to the play, Mrs. Lindsay and I, and afterwards to a ball. I wanted to give it all up in order to stay at home with Herbert; but he said it was nonsense,—that there would be no use in my doing so, as particular business would take him away all the evening. I ventured to ask what such sudden business could be—if at least he could not dine with me? I had taken his hand—he drew it angrily away, and said I tormented him.—I went to the play—Lascelles did not go with us; I had avoided him

Digitized by Google

of late, for ever since that day in Kensington Gardens I had felt afraid of him.

"We were to come home early to dress for the ball at D——e House. Mrs. Lindsay accordingly set me down at the hotel, and was to call for me in an hour to take me there. When I came up-stairs, I found the room all dark, and Marianne was nowhere to be found. Every drawer was locked up; I could find none of my things to dress, and going to the ball was therefore out of the question. In truth I was not sorry for this; I felt so little disposed for amusement, and still hoped that Herbert might relent and return home. I wrote directly to Mrs. Lindsay, and told her what had occurred, begging her to think no more about me. In a short time a note was brought from her, saying she had also determined on giving up the ball, for it was so delicious a night for Vauxhall, that she thought it would be a pity not to take advantage of it, particularly as she knew I had never been there, and might go dressed as I was. She bade me not detain her servant, as he was going on with some notes to others, to whom she was proposing to join our party; and she ended by saying that she would call for me before twelve, unless she heard to the contrary. I had no ready excuse to make to this new plan, and foolishly did not like to give the real one; I therefore made no reply, and in consequence about twelve I was told she was at the door.

"It was with a degree of reluctance, which I could hardly account for to myself, that I then left the house.

"On entering the carriage I found two persons in it besides Mrs. Lindsay, and to my vexation immediately saw that one of them was Lascelles. I felt much irritated both with him and her, for she well knew that I wished to avoid him. To retract was now of course out of the question, but I did not attempt to conceal my displeasure, and resolved at least on being separated from him on reaching Vauxhall. This, however, proved to be impossible—no party appeared; immediately on leaving the carriage, Mrs. Lindsay and her companion walked on together, and I was left to Lascelles.

Digitized by Google

"O that you could look into my heart and see how true all this is!" exclaimed Theresa as she gazed most beseechingly in Trevelyan's face, a deep crimson flushing her cheek; then, after a moment's pause, as if collecting courage to proceed, she continued, "Lascelles soon saw I was vexed and angry; he then again assumed the language of friendship; he said that he was quite aware of having once by an unguarded word offended me, but that it was past—that he now saw the impropriety of his conduct—indeed, hardly knew how he had ever ventured so far to forget himself; he talked of esteem, respect,—he even spoke to me about Herbert—seemed to enter into my feelings, lamented over his present pursuits, and promised he would talk to him—in short, his language was so different from what it had been, and it in consequence so entirely reassured me, that we were again friends, and I even began to take myself to task for my former ridiculous prudery.

"All this time we followed Mrs. Lindsay at a little distance. As we were returning from one part of the garden to the centre, by an alley but dimly lighted up, I on a sudden saw a figure (so like Herbert's that it made me start) dash down a walk in an opposite direction. I could not help stopping, and when I looked again I felt sure it was he, and I fancied I recognised Marianne with him!—I will not attempt to describe the state into which this unexpected sight threw me.—I said nothing to Lascelles, but hurried on, scarcely knowing what I was about;—I believe he spoke to me, but I did not hear him—my brain felt on fire.

"We kept pacing on; while wholly occupied by that dreadful apparition, I looked fearfully around in every direction for its reappearance, although the conviction which I thus eagerly sought for could only have produced despair. At last I again saw them,—for Herbert I could never mistake,—and Marianne was still on his arm—we were then almost close to them—there was a momentary attempt at concealment.—I darted on—yet not so quickly but that I heard Herbert speak. '*N'importe*,' said he, '*je m'en soucie guère!*' and then he laughed!—Herbert

Digitized by Google

laughed at the torture which he must have known he was inflicting upon me!—I believe I at that minute totally lost my senses.

"Lascelles too had heard all, had seen all,—he also saw but too well the effect produced upon me.—I cannot tell you what then passed, what he said to me, it is all so confused.—But when I left Mrs. Lindsay's carriage at the door of the hotel, Lascelles got out too, and he whispered to me that in half an hour he would return for me.—He talked of revenge—love—unchangeable, unceasing love and happiness. Revenge was all I thought of—and all I now remember distinctly was—that I agreed.—Oh, God!" she exclaimed clasping her hands in agony,—"that I agreed to give myself up to him!—To him, whom I never loved—him whom I now abhor!—But I was driven to madness—I knew not what I did.

"I hastened past every one up to my room,—for I thought all who saw me must read in my face the dreadful resolution into which I had been hurried, and to which I felt impelled by some power I could not resist. I believe Lascelles had spoken to me about our journey, and desired me to collect what I might require for it;—but I was incapable of all thought or exertion, and kept pacing up and down my room dreading yet longing for his return,—for any thing, in short, which could put an end to the agony which I then endured.—In the hope of finding some, at least temporary relief, and to quiet the horrid irritation of my nerves, I eagerly drank off some wine which had been left in the room; but this only made me worse, for it got into my head, adding to its confusion,—and I felt so giddy I was obliged to lie down on the couch. Poor little Oscar, who had been all this time quietly sleeping upon it, immediately sprang towards me and began licking my hand, looking earnestly in my face.—I cannot tell you how strangely the sight of this poor dog then affected me;—I could not bear it,—and pushing him roughly from me, I heard him fall on the ground, and his cries rang in my ears.—But my feelings then seemed all paralysed.

"It was now near three, and Marianne had never re-

Digitized by Google

turned:—at last the door of my room opened;—it was Lascelles,—he seized my hand,—'There is not a moment to lose,' said he in a low voice; 'we can now pass unobserved,' and he hurried me down stairs after him.—I looking anxiously around, for I believe the sight of a human being would even then have still recalled me to my senses, for I should have looked on any one as a friend, a protector.—Oh, if you had but been there, I might still have been saved!—I should not then have been ruined for ever although innocent—branded with infamy and yet blameless!"

Theresa grasped for breath, and her whole frame trembled as with the cold shiver of ague, although her hand was burning hot and her cheeks crimson. Trevelyan again entreated she would take something to compose her, and defer the rest of her story until she was better fitted for the task.

"No, no! let me go on while I can," said she wildly, "for my head is every minute getting more and more bewildered—and you must now know all.—Lascelles himself unbolted the hall-door, and we were in the street! the fresh night air seemed to get into my brain, and take away what senses I still had left.—I was hardly conscious what I was about—whom I was with.—At last, when we had reached the next street, there was a carriage waiting;—Lascelles put me into it, for I was so giddy with the speed at which we had gone I could not support myself.—I felt something spring in after me,—it was poor little Oscar, who had, unobserved, followed us. Lascelles seized him by the throat to throw him out;—the dog's screams roused me, for they then struck on my heart; I freed him from his grasp, and he crept for safety behind my feet.—A strange pang of remorse at that moment shot through my soul;—your sister's image suddenly rushed before me, and I was on the point of throwing myself out of the carriage; but Lascelles was already at my side,—the door was closed—and we set off at full speed.

"The frightful rate at which we went, the sound of the rattling stones, all, I suppose, worked upon my al-

Digitized by Google

ready overstrained nerves, and I could no longer restrain the hysteric sobs which nearly stifled me; for I felt as if driven by a whirlwind into some horrible gulf. Lascelles said every thing most kind—most passionate to me, I believe;—but I heard nothing;—and when he would have taken my hand, I shuddering snatched it away, and drawing back into the corner of the carriage, entreated him not to speak to me.

"We still flew along with the most bewildering rapidity; and yet every now and then Lascelles, putting down the glass, bade the drivers hasten their speed. At length, in about an hour, I suppose, we stopped to change horses.

"I then again thought of escape.—I looked out of the carriage window, but all was dark—there was not a creature stirring, and I could see nothing but the clouds of smoke which came from the exhausted horses. Still I looked wistfully around for help,—though Heaven knows who or what I hoped to see. In an instant, however, we were again off with redoubled speed.

"As day broke, Oscar,—whom I had totally forgotten,—roused by the light, crept from his hiding-place, and suddenly putting his feet on my knees, looked me steadfastly in the face. Again the image of your sister appeared before me—and for the first time then I thought of you!—The dreadful situation into which I had madly plunged, struck me with fresh horror, and I turned with dread and dismay toward the companion of my flight.

"A strange sort of delirium then suddenly seized me,—for I fancied that I beheld through the still uncertain twilight the features of my husband!—I screamed with terror. Lascelles, alarmed, again took hold of my hand, entreating me to compose myself. His very touch curdled my blood:—with my heart full of love for Herbert, I had abandoned myself to another!

"I struggled to get free from his grasp, and he at last let me go; but, as he relinquished my hand, I heard something hard fall on the floor of the chaise, and when I stooped down—I beheld your bracelet with the clasp broken!—Oh, my best, my only friend!" said

Digitized by Google

Theresa, grasping Trevelyan's hand, "it was you who thus saved your poor maddened Theresa.

"A deadly sickness came over me, and observing this house before us, I inquired if it was there we were to change horses, and entreated to be allowed a few minutes' repose. I suppose the paleness of my face satisfied Lascelles that my illness was real, for he called to the drivers to stop, and lifting me out of the carriage, he sent for the landlady, leaving me under her charge, while he went to order the fresh horses. As he quitted the room, I observed that he whispered something to her—this terrified me the more, and the instant the door was closed I threw myself on the compassion of the woman, and on my knees I entreated her to save me. I cannot tell what story I told her, but she took pity on my distress, and promising to protect me, she hurried me up to this room. I then wrote a few lines to Lascelles.—I told him no power on earth should induce me again to see him.—I implored him to leave me instantly—and if he had one feeling of real affection,—one spark of honour,—to save me from utter ruin, by immediately telling all to my husband, and entreating him to come to me.

"I don't know what then passed,—but I heard loud and angry voices in the inn-yard;—at last a carriage drove off, and I was told he was gone.

"I sank into a sort of stupor, I believe, for it was not till many hours after that my helpless solitary situation struck me. The kind landlady, indeed, first roused me to a sense of my forlorn situation, by asking if I had no friend to whom she could send. I then inquired where I was,—and judge of my thankfulness when I found I was not far from you—you, my deliverer, my protector!—And oh, be still my friend," Theresa exclaimed with vehemence, "and save me from ruin.—You know I am guiltless,—let not the world brand me with infamy!"

"Theresa!" said Trevelyan, in a solemn tone, "it is not the world's condemnation that you should now most fear;—first, endeavour to make your peace with your God! with *that* God whose laws you have set at nought, and who yet watched over you while you were madly

Digitized by Google

braving his will! For it was *his* merciful arm which preserved you from the perdition which you so heedlessly courted, and to which so many have been abandoned—Oh, kneel in gratitude to Him!"

Theresa stared at him aghast,—for having, as by a miracle, been rescued from the pollution of guilt, and her mind being still in that delirium of passion which had driven her on to her ruin, she had never once paused to reflect on her conduct—had never once thought of her criminality in the sight of Heaven. She had raved of innocence, as if Lascelles and her husband were alone answerable for what had happened; and she had even claimed, as her due, the continued good opinion of the world.

These startling words of Trevelyan's, however, at once roused her as yet benumbed conscience. But exhausted by the violent feelings to which she had given way, she shrank appalled from the picture of guilt which he had presented to her; her heart turned sick—a deadly paleness overspread her countenance,—and she sank back senseless in the chair.

Trevelyan, seeing that her bodily strength was no longer able to struggle with the fever of her mind, and knowing that, till the one was to a degree restored, it was vain to administer to the other, immediately sent for the kind-hearted landlady, who laid her on the bed, and gave her such reviving medicines as her house afforded.

"Poor young lady," said she, as she wiped away the cold sweat from Theresa's forehead, "I dare say she is quite exhausted, and no wonder, for she has not tasted a bit of food since she entered the house, besides the fatigue of travelling all night! Lord bless us! these inexperienced, thoughtless creatures, set galloping off with the first man as asks them, without ever thinking of what they are about, and so of course repent their folly all the rest of their lives. However, as I told Miss, it is better to change one's mind going than returning, as so many do, and when it is too late. I have had more than one such an affair here in my house, as it lies so convenient-like in the north road, and I know it is always safest in

Digitized by Google

these cases to side with the young lady, when there happens to be a difference of opinion between the lovers. Her gentleman was in a sad taking this morning after I gave him her letter, and we had a hard matter to get him away—even my husband was obliged to interfere, and talk of fetching a magistrate;—for I had promised the young lady I would protect her, so was determined to stand by her to the last,—more particularly as she seemed no way partial to the gentleman; and certainly it is a great pity to be married to a person one don't like, when there may be others going that one might."

Finding from all this, that the landlady considered the business in the light of a mere thoughtless elopement of young persons not knowing their own minds, Trevelyan thought it best to let her continue in her mistake, and therefore designating Theresa as Miss Howard, and a near connexion of his, he questioned the hostess as to the events of the morning, hoping to learn something respecting Lascelles which might enable him to form some idea as to his probable future conduct with regard to his victim.

"Why, my Lord, as I was saying," replied the landlady, "the gentleman was in a precious passion when he read the young lady's note, and he swore he would be revenged on her for giving him such a journey all for nothing, (and to be sure it must have been provoking enough—posting eighteen-pence a mile, as it is now at most houses on the road,)—and he cursed himself, and her, and all of us; but bless him, I did not care a farthing for his oaths, for that is always the way with them there lovers; they bluster for awhile—but I dare say it is all over by this time, and he as glad as the lady herself, perhaps, to have got so easily out of the scrape—And I am sure I am very glad she chanced to take fright just at my door, for it is not every one, perhaps, who would have liked to meddle in such matters, but I am always happy to be of any use to travellers in any way, and your Lordship may depend on my paying every possible attention to Miss Howard."

Trevelyan felt satisfied that these proffers of kindness

Digitized by Google

were to be trusted to; for he was well aware that a title always commands respect at an inn, whatever it may anywhere else, as it is hoped that the profit on the one side may be in proportion to the rank on the other; he therefore fearlessly entrusted Theresa, (who was not then in a state to receive any comfort from himself,) to the care of her hostess, and leaving the apartment, he repaired to that adjoining, in order to form some plan for extricating her, and indeed himself, from their present difficulties.

To save Theresa's reputation was of course his first object; and for that purpose, her immediate removal to Cheshunt, under the roof and protection of his wife, was certainly the best expedient. Trevelyan's noble, generous nature sometimes led him into mistakes in his judgment of others, supposing them to be influenced by the same motives and feelings which directed his own conduct, and by which he thought that of every Christian must be regulated. Under this delusion he now wrote to Augusta; judging that after all that had passed between them on the subject of Theresa, his present communication would be more safely made by letter than in a personal interview. It was by this time past eleven o'clock and pitch dark—so that to return home was out of the question; and he besides felt bound by every consideration of affection, of pity—indeed of duty—not to desert his defenceless charge. But after having come to the resolution of writing an account of what had happened, to Augusta, and appealing to her compassion in favour of this victim of the vice of others, he did not find the execution of his intentions so easy, and many a letter was begun, which was destroyed unfinished.

At length, thinking it best in no way to advert to any of their former differences on the subject, he, in the open language of confidence, related the whole story of Theresa's flight; hoping also that it might in a great measure remove Augusta's jealous suspicions with regard to himself. He said everything which could rouse her better feelings; showing her the incalculable benefit she might confer on a fellow-creature, by allowing her own unspot-

Digitized by Google

ted character, and established reputation in the world, to protect and screen one who, but for that moment of thoughtless passion, was as innocent as herself. He appealed to her sense of duty as a wife and a Christian. —"Theresa is as unsullied as she is unfortunate," he added; "if she were not,—if her innocence were not as clear as the day,—do you think I would insult you, my wife,—the mother of my children,—by proposing such a measure? And again let me entreat you to recollect that Lady Herbert has not a friend on earth but myself;—that I feel as sacredly bound to protect her as if she was my sister or daughter—and, in short, bold in the rectitude of my own motives, I must frankly declare, that let what will be the result to myself, I *will* uphold her. Grant, therefore, this my earnest prayer, and let Theresa, from this time, be the means of uniting, instead of throwing discord between us."

Trevelyan concluded by saying that he was going immediately to write to Lord Herbert, who would, he had no doubt, (for his own sake as well as her's) immediately join his wife, and that thus the conduct and fair fame of every one concerned would be satisfactorily cleared to the world.

To Lord Herbert he also wrote an account of the whole unfortunate transaction; as briefly, but as nearly according with Theresa's own words, as he could, dwelling on the particulars of her flight, which proved her innocence, and appealing to his sense of justice as well as honour, to rescue his wife—and, indeed himself—from the disgrace into which his conduct had plunged them both, by again taking her under his protection.

These two letters Trevelyan intended to send off express by the very first dawn of day, and he was sealing them for that purpose, when the landlady entered the room, alarm painted on her countenance.

"I fear Miss Howard is very ill," said she, "and I really don't know what to do for her; she talks very wildly, and by the burning heat of her skin and her quick pulse, I am sure she is in so high a fever, that some medical aid would be most advisable."

Digitized by Google

Much alarmed, Trevelyan hastened into Theresa's apartment. The moment she saw him she uttered a dreadful shriek, and addressing him as her husband, vehemently asserted her innocence, and implored him by all his former love for her, to save her from infamy. Trevelyan spoke to her, but she did not appear even to hear him, and continued her wild ravings, while her crimson fevered cheeks, and the hard rapid throbbings of her pulse, but too well confirmed the landlady's report.

For an instant Trevelyan gazed on her in mute hopeless distress. But this very distress at length roused him to exertion; and learning from the landlady that an eminent physician resided at St. Albans,—not above nine miles distant,—he directly sent off an express, desiring his immediate attendance. It then suddenly occurred to him to send for his sister's maid, and he experienced a degree of temporary relief, amid the perplexities by which he was surrounded, in the idea of placing Theresa in her care. He therefore, without delay, wrote to Humphries, and gave directions that a person should make all possible speed to town with his letter to Lord Herbert; then proceed with his despatch to Richmond, and endeavour, in his way back, to obtain an answer to that left at Mivart's Hotel. At six o'clock a man was also sent to Cheshunt with his letter to Augusta.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VIII.

> "And this was she! the peerless and the bright—
> The false world's darling!
> Yes, this was she!—but mark ye, I beseech,
> Who love the world—mark this mute wretchedness,
> And grave it on your hearts."

Hour succeeded hour; and still the medical man did not appear;—while, even to Trevelyan's unskilled eyes, the rapid progress of Theresa's disorder was but too evident. He passed those wretched hours restlessly, pacing up and down the apartment adjoining hers; hurrying to her bed-side at the least sound of any unusual noise, and then as quickly leaving it, unable to endure the sight of her fearfully suffering state. The landlady watched her with the most unremitting attention, giving her every relief which her small skill in medicine suggested.

At length, about seven in the morning, a carriage was heard to drive up to the inn door; Trevelyan hurried down stairs, and, to his inexpressible joy, found it had brought the expected doctor, "a case of some importance having prevented his attending to his lordship's summons sooner."

Treyelyan led him up to Theresa's room, and then left him with the landlady, awaiting his report in the next, with feelings which can better be imagined than described.

And that report, when at last it came, only confirmed his worst apprehensions. "There is much mischief here," said the doctor; "and some, I fear, beyond my reach. Violent mental excitement acting upon a debilitated frame, and an apparently habitually irritable nervous system, has produced most alarming inflammatory symptoms. Our first object, of course, must be to lower the fever, and until I have tried how far the remedies

Digitized by Google

which I shall administer produce that desired effect, I cannot pronounce upon the case. I understand the mixtures required are to be had at no great distance, therefore (with your lordship's approbation) I will immediately send for them, and remain as long as my other professional duties permit," (added he, looking at his watch,) "in order to judge of their effect on my patient. Miss Howard must be kept as quiet as possible, and all agitation spared her. The cause of her present distressing state I can (from what the landlady has told me) suspect; and therefore think it right to recommend the most soothing treatment in every way—whatever, in short, can best ease her mind. At present," continued the doctor, "she is past all such mode of relief, for her pulse is at 130, and she seems perfectly delirious."

The prescribed medicines were procured and taken;—the doctor stayed his *possible* time,—but left his patient much in the same state.

Trevelyan, after again and again pressing Theresa's burning hand in his, counting the throbbings of her pulse, and moistening her parched lips, had, for a time, relinquished these duties to the landlady, and was in the adjoining room reckoning the time till the probable return of his messenger from Richmond, when a packet was brought him. Recognising immediately Lady Launceston's hand-writing, he eagerly seized it out of the servant's hand,—but for a minute or two had not courage to open it, as he felt that on that letter depended every prospect of future happiness and comfort both for him and Theresa. At last, reproaching himself for entertaining such injurious suspicions of his wife, he hastily broke the seal and read as follows:—

"I cannot pretend that the contents of your letter just received have in *any* way surprised me, as I have been long prepared for what has now happened. That I am equally little surprised at what you require of me, I will not say; and I feel the less scruple in at once refusing your request, being convinced that, when the present

Digitized by Google

strange delusion under which you now labour is over, you will yourself see the matter in the same light which I do.

"With regard to Lady Herbert Leslie I will say nothing, as I have no connexion whatever with her. Nor will I comment on your idea that you are in '*honour* and *duty*' bound to insult your wife, and desert your home and family, for a person who has deserted every thing a woman should most respect,—for that is a subject on which we appear to have such totally different principles and sentiments, that it is vain to hope we can ever understand each other.

"One thing, however, I will venture to observe. If Lady Herbert is the '*perfectly spotless*' character you represent her, surely under present circumstances, and *all* considerations, her husband is a more fitting protector for her than yourself; and if (as you say) 'he will no doubt immediately join her,' he is also an all-sufficient one, for I must consider the duties of guardian,—to which you allude as so paramount,—to have ceased when she obtained by her marriage another lawful protector.

"Under all these circumstances, therefore, allow me to decline what you propose; and I do so with the greater confidence, as I am certain that by the time this letter reaches you, your sentiments on the subject will coincide with my own. If not—I can only lament that they should so generally differ, for that difference cannot alter my determination.

"Although you do not make any inquiries, I must conclude that you will be glad to hear that St. Ives continues mending. Yours,

"AUGUSTA LAUNCESTON."

On reading this cruel reply to his petition in favour of Theresa, Trevelyan was perhaps strongly tempted to give way to bitter invectives against the hard-hearted obduracy which thus at once annihilated all his hopes; and to throw the letter,—already crushed in his clenched hand,—into the fire. But at length, overcoming this first moment of passion, he endeavoured calmly to reconsider its contents, hoping that his own overwrought expecta-

Digitized by Google

tions might have magnified their repulsive character. On a second perusal, however, they still told the same tale of pharisaical self-righteousness and obstinacy, and still more convinced him that any further application to Lady Launceston would be perfectly vain.

What plan therefore to pursue in order to extricate Theresa from her perilous situation, he now knew not; and—as to a forlorn hope,—he turned all his thoughts towards the result of his letter to Lord Herbert, and the possibility of his revived affection for his wife, on hearing of her danger—For that she *was* in danger Trevelyan could now no longer conceal from himself. The physician, who had returned in the afternoon, evidently thought ill of the case, having entirely changed his plan of treatment in consequence of the total failure of his first prescribed remedies; and although he seemed cautious in giving a decided opinion, yet it was plain that he entertained very little hope of his patient. During all these hours Theresa had continued in a state of entire stupor, except when roused from it by the wild ravings of delirium; and the only temporary relief to his anxious sufferings which Trevelyan the while experienced, was when he saw the faithful Humphries at last arrive.

She had set out the instant she received his summons, —too happy in an opportunity to prove her affection for her departed mistress, and her sense of gratitude to him, by devoting herself to the comfort of one whom they both so tenderly loved.—Under Humphries' care Trevelyan at least felt sure that the poor sufferer would receive every attention and relief of which her state was susceptible, and the result he humbly left to the All-wise Disposer of events.

The messenger who returned about the time that Humphries arrived, had in his way back called, as directed, at Mivart's Hotel; but whether Lord Herbert Leslie was at home, or in town, he could not tell, as in reply to his inquiries he was merely informed that there had been no message left for him.

Theresa became so much worse during the following night, and the doctor, who arrived about nine in the

Digitized by Google

morning, gave so discouraging a report of her state, that Trevelyan resolved on once more writing to Lord Herbert, to warn him of the danger of delay if he wished again to see his injured wife.

The heavy hours passed on, and still no favourable symptom seemed to take place in Theresa's illness; no relenting letter came from Lady Launceston, and Lord Herbert did not appear.

Towards the afternoon Trevelyan's attention was roused by the sound of a carriage driving hastily into the inn-yard, and in a minute or two he heard his own name pronounced on the stairs, as if in answer to inquiries respecting him. Could it be Augusta?—Once more his kind heart leaped to meet her, and he would then have hailed her appearance as that of a ministering angel!—The footsteps approached—and the door opened,—but instead of Augusta,—instead of Lord Herbert,—the kind-hearted Sir Henry Williams was ushered into the room.

He entered with a countenance of alarm and anxiety, and hastily coming up to Trevelyan, "For Heaven's sake, my dear friend," said he, "what is all this strange story?—what has happened?—Having heard nothing about it, I rode over this morning to Cheshunt to see you, and there I was told such a confused sort of a tale, that not being able to make anything of it, I determined on getting a chaise in order to come on here directly, that I might learn the truth;—so do tell me—what in the world is the matter with you all?"

The sight of a friend, and the soothing voice of sympathy, so much affected Trevelyan,—rousing him out of the state of unnatural composure in which his faculties had during the last twenty-four hours been benumbed,—that it was some time before he could make his impatient auditor comprehend the truth.

"Well, I suspected something of all this from what Lady Launceston told me," said Sir Henry, after Trevelyan had finished his narrative.

"Lady Launceston, what, have you seen her?" eagerly inquired the latter,—"to-day?"

Digitized by Google

"Yes, I am just come from her, and she informed me of your sudden departure from home, and hinted at what —or rather *who*—still detained you; but I cannot say *her* version of the story exactly agreed with your's. Faith, her ladyship seems to think that Lady Herbert somehow contrived to run off both with you, and Mr. what's his name—a trio, hey!—Egad, that would be something quite new,"—and in spite of his distress about Theresa, Sir Henry laughed heartily at the idea of the double elopement—while poor Trevelyan, his feelings every way wounded, struck his clenched hand on the table with impatience.

"However, after all," continued Sir Henry, "we must make some allowances for Lady Launceston, for in truth I cannot quite wonder at her jealousy—things do *look* deuced queer, that 's the truth, and I suspect my good Lady Williams herself would not—even at this time of day—very much approve of my galloping off after some old flirt of mine, under any pretence whatever; and considering Lady Herbert in the light Lady Launceston does, I am not either very much surprised at her making some wry faces at your proposal of receiving her under her roof. We must surely allow there is some reason in all this;—and yet, on the other hand"—continued Sir Henry after a pause, "I declare I do not see how in any one thing you could have acted differently from what you have done; it has been all plaguy unlucky certainly, but at all events you have nothing to reproach yourself with, and I hope that in time we shall bring Lady Launceston to see your conduct more fairly. There must however be a little mutual forgiveness; for your wife *will* consider herself as aggrieved—that I see very plainly. She does not know Lady Herbert as we do, and therefore cannot feel the same interest in her, and not feeling it, I do not wonder she disapproves of your partiality; but I will see what I can make of her Ladyship. I will go back again to her, and perhaps a little coaxing and flattery may do wonders—hey?"

Trevelyan shook his head. "I suppose," resumed Sir Henry, "the great point upon which to press, is getting

Digitized by Google

her to consent to Lady Herbert's removal to Cheshunt?"

"I fear," said Trevelyan, in a low broken voice, "it is now too late for Lady Launceston to be of any use to one who will probably never again leave this roof but for that home"——he stopped, shuddering, and covered his face with his hand.

"Cheer up, my good friend," said Sir Henry, much moved, "you have got hypped here all by yourself, and so fancy things worse than they are. Only consider how young Lady Herbert is—how many have had bad fevers, and have recovered—how many have had obstinate wives who have at last been brought to reason—leave that part of the business to me—I will bring Lady Launceston round, I am sure; and now I think of it, it is not only for Lady Herbert's sake, but for yours—for her own, indeed—that she should at least drive over here and see after you, if it was only for the sake of appearances. In short, I will explain it all to her, and depend upon it, I shall settle the matter to your satisfaction, and bring your wife to you in a much better mood than you expect. But now tell me a little more about that poor dear little soul Theresa—when was it the doctor saw her last?"

"At nine this morning, and he will return again in the evening," replied Trevelyan. "I sometimes fancy that she is a shade better—she is certainly quieter, and appears to suffer less; but I am fearful of giving way to hope—in short, God knows—I hardly know what I *should* hope for."

They were now standing together near the door which led into Theresa's apartment, it was not closed, and gently pushing it aside, Trevelyan led his friend towards the bed. At the sight of the pallid face, which he had seen so lately brilliant with youth and beauty, the kind-hearted veteran drew back much affected. "Poor dear pretty creature!" said he, wiping his eyes, "what a pity it is she did not keep her temper better when she saw her husband philandering with the abigail; but it was provoking enough, faith: however, I suppose it is all for the best. At all events, I am glad I have seen her, and can tell Lady Launceston how really ill she is; it may be of

Digitized by Google

use, and so now the sooner I return to her the better; and depend upon seeing us *both* here very soon, for I think I had better come with her,—hey!—for fear any thing should come over her by the way, you know."

Trevelyan again and again thanked his warm-hearted friend for all his kindness; assuring him that his visit had been of the greatest comfort, and that he felt most grateful for his promised kind interference, whatever might be the result. He then accompanied him down stairs, and saw him depart on his kind mission, but with little hope of any good to be produced by the negotiation.

During the remainder of that day, Theresa continued to be so much quieter, that Trevelyan's hopes revived, and he looked with anxiety for the arrival of the doctor, in the fond expectation of their being confirmed. As soon therefore as he saw his carriage driving towards the inn, he hurried down to meet him.

"I really think she is better this evening," said he; "Humphries says she has recognised her. I have not ventured myself to speak to her, for fear of occasioning the least agitation."

"You were quite right," replied the doctor; "in Miss Howard's state, we must use the greatest caution; but I trust I shall be able to say, that your lordship's report of her amendment is well founded."

They went together into Theresa's apartment, when the doctor immediately approached her, and anxiously felt her pulse. She seemed at once to be aware of his presence, for she opened her eyes, looking steadfastly at him. He asked her several questions, to all of which she replied quite collectedly. Again, he more than once counted with the most minute attention the throbbings of her pulse. During all this time, poor Trevelyan's heart beat with a rapidity probably far beyond even fever's pace, for the sound of her voice, again restored to its natural tone, had thrilled to its inmost recess; and although he had a few hours before doubted what his hopes for her *should* be, he could now be at no loss to ascertain what they actually *were*.

After a time, the doctor turned from the bed, and with-

Digitized by Google

out speaking beckoned Trevelyan into the adjoining room. "She is better—much better, is she not?" eagerly inquired the latter.

The doctor shook his head—"I must not flatter you, my Lord," said he, in a tone which curdled his auditor's blood. "The symptoms of the disorder are changed; it has no longer the same effect on her faculties, which makes her appear so much better, but——" and his countenance again betrayed what he seemed unwilling to put into words—"All will depend on the next twenty-four hours: if her strength at all rallies between this and to-morrow evening, we may still entertain some hope of her struggling through the attack; if not——"

"If not!—God's will be done!" exclaimed Trevelyan, as he sunk into a chair, and covered his agitated face with his hand.

"You may safely go to Miss Howard," continued the doctor, "but speak quietly to her; whatever is calculated to ease her mind, and soothe her spirits, will be of use. Some sudden mental distress has evidently brought on this illness, and therefore the sooner she is relieved from it the better. I cannot of course venture to inquire into family secrets," he continued, "but in a case where the mind is so evidently acting on the body, I feel myself authorised at least to give advice, and I must recommend the most soothing treatment."

Trevelyan in reply could only press the doctor's hand, his report having totally overpowered him. "I will endeavour to be here again early to-morrow morning," continued the latter, "but I have unfortunately a case of great importance at some distance, so that I cannot quite answer for my time. Miss Howard's maid however is aware of every thing that should be done for her, and I must frankly own that in her present state it is to an effort of nature we must look, more than to the power of medicine."

How difficult it is to bear that sudden revulsion from hope to despair, which one single word may occasion, and by which our very existence seems to be at once overthrown! And the more buoyant the former feeling,

Digitized by Google

the farther we are impelled to the contrary extreme, on receiving the least check to our self-raised expectations. Such was the effect produced upon Trevelyan by the doctor's words, and so completely had they unmanned him, that it was some time before he felt himself sufficiently composed to venture into Theresa's room. He then quietly approached the bed, and sitting down by it, took hold of her hand. But his gentle pressure did not seem to rouse her from her stupor, and although he twice spoke, she evidently did not notice his presence, the momentary return of animation having already subsided.

Often and often during that anxious night, with the doctor's sad forboding words still ringing in his ears, Trevelyan's trembling hand pressed hers, in the hope of discovering some symptom of returning strength; but each time he with a sigh relinquished it—sick at heart.

Another day broke, and Theresa was still much the same. Soon after nine that morning, a carriage drove up to the house, but instead of the physician, whom Trevelyan was impatiently expecting—although he hardly looked for any relief to his fears even from him—it brought Sir Henry Williams, who entered the room, evidently much disconcerted.

"Well, here I am again—and alone, I am sorry to say. But my Lady Launceston is such a deuced odd woman, I really can make nothing of her. She is the first, egad! that has ever got the better of me;—but nothing I could say or swear—for I really believe I at last *did* swear—had power to undeceive her with regard to Lady Herbert, whom she talks of as totally lost in character—a regular abandoned woman in short, and considers you as under some strange delusion with regard to her. I began by hinting at your wish that she might, as soon as well enough, be removed to Cheshunt. But, zounds! my lady was off at a tangent! She wondered how you could think of making so extraordinary a request—allowed that you had a right to bring whom you pleased into your own house, but as *she* could not be expected to welcome such guests as Lady Herbert, the only way she could accommodate you, would be by herself

Digitized by Google

leaving your roof, and that she would therefore immediately set out for Cornwall. I told her that such a step, far from being agreeable to you, would only make bad worse, besides being now quite unnecessary, as Lady Herbert's increased illness precluded all hope of removing her anywhere at present; but that I could not help, as a friend, suggesting to her Ladyship the propriety of driving over here, if it were only to save appearances, as it was rather strange to leave you all alone to nurse a beautiful woman.

"This representation of the case seemed to be an unlucky hit of mine, as she hastily said, and with more of anger than—to give the devil his due—she had yet betrayed, that she thought it would be still more strange in a wife to go and visit her husband's mistress, sick or well. This reply of hers put me fairly into a passion, and I spoke my mind to her pretty freely, extolling you to the skies; but it was all to no purpose, and she persisted in her determination to go immediately to Trevelyan Castle, in order to leave the coast clear for you and your supposed paramour. In short, I am sorry to say, with all my boastings I have certainly bungled the business sadly."

"Well, well!" said Trevelyan, in a dejected tone, "do not vex yourself, my good friend; it matters little now. Lady Launceston will not be called upon for the sacrifice of her rigid principles of morality; her Christian charity will be put to no trial; for she whom she so cruelly injures will soon be beyond the reach of all human condemnation"—and he raised his eyes to Heaven, as if claiming for the poor rejected Theresa that pity from above which was denied her upon earth.

Sir Henry looked on him in compassion. "Is there any other way in which I can be of use to you?" said he, after a moment's pause. "I have been thinking, if I were to try and get hold of Lord Herbert, and tell him all about it; but then, knowing him so little as I do, my interference would perhaps be rather awkward, and I might run my old head into a fine scrape; still, I would willingly venture on any thing to serve you, or indeed

Digitized by Google

my poor friend Howard's daughter, who has certainly been cruelly used among them all! . Oh, what a fool she was," he continued, "to prefer that precious libertine to you! and what a fool *I* was to ask him to dinner that day at Twickenham, for it was then all this mischief began. But we won't go back to all that," added Sir Henry quickly, on observing the expression of keen anguish on Trevelyan's countenance; "what can't be cured must be endured: so what shall I do now? Faith, I have really a great mind to go at once to town, and see whether I cannot succeed better with Lord Herbert than I did with Lady Launceston. By the by, I am sorry to say the whole story is abroad, although of course variously told; and I to-day heard that it is reported a duel has taken place between Lord Herbert and Mr. Lascelles; but I believe it ended in mere smoke. And, indeed, what had they to fight about? If a dog lays down his bone, he has no business to fly upon another for picking it up; so it is said the supposed combatants fired in the air, and then, declaring themselves to be mutually satisfied, shook hands, and walked off the field arm-in-arm:—a pretty farce, truly! that was not the way we used to fight when I was young."

"Well," continued Sir Henry, after a pause, and having paced up and down the room several times lost in thought—"I am determined what to do—I will go directly to town, and see what information I can pick up; and then act accordingly, and if I have any good news to bring, I will hasten back here as fast as I can. So God bless you!—and no thanks," added he, observing Trevelyan about to express his sense of kindness—"believe me, you owe me none; for if you were out of the question, I would equally go through fire and water for that poor dear Theresa, particularly now that my blood is up about her; so do not despair, but hope the best." Then heartily shaking Trevelyan by the hand, as he left him, Sir Henry returned to his carriage, and set off for London.

The weary hours crept on, and still Trevelyan could not flatter himself that he perceived any symptom of re-

Digitized by Google

turning strength in Theresa's pulse. Towards the end of the afternoon, as he was sitting absorbed in thought in the room adjoining that in which she lay, he suddenly heard hurried footsteps in the passage leading to his apartment; in a minute the door was opened, and the waiter abruptly announcing—"A gentleman who wishes to speak with your Lordship,"—Lord Herbert Leslie stood before him.

Trevelyan started from his chair, and for a minute each looked at the other incapable of speech.

The seven years which had passed over Lord Herbert since Trevelyan had last seen him, and still more perhaps the life which he had led, told strongly on his person. The fresh look of vigorous youth was already gone, and although there were still remains of that beauty of form and feature which had so powerfully captivated poor Theresa's youthful fancy, yet the mind now involuntarily recoiled from a look of profligacy which was stamped on his whole person.

Trevelyan was the first to overcome the awkwardness of their meeting. "I conclude," said he, "that you have received my second letter from hence."

"It was the nature of its contents," replied Lord Herbert haughtily, "which has brought me here now; for as to the first with which your Lordship honoured me, I really did not consider myself obliged to attend to it; nor should I probably have felt called upon to obey your summons at all, had I not received a most satisfactory explanation from Mr. Lascelles, although I must say it still leaves me at a loss to account for Lady Herbert's extraordinary conduct, and your extraordinary expectations from me, considering what has passed."

Lord Herbert was continuing in the same strain of bravado, but Trevelyan suddenly stopped him. "There is no time to be lost in vain unmerited invectives, Lord Herbert, and it was not in order to dispute on your wife's conduct that I requested your presence here, but that you might, before it is too late, make all the reparation in your power, and obtain her forgiveness."

"Reparation!—Her forgiveness!" exclaimed Lord

Digitized by Google

Herbert, his face reddening with passion; "surely your Lordship mistakes our relative situations?"

"No," said Trevelyan firmly; "I repeat it again, *her* forgiveness. Hear me, Lord Herbert,—hear me speak to you in the character of—your wife's father. On that day when I gave her to you at the altar—when I gave you my heart's blood!" he added, with a burst of feeling which he seemed unable to suppress, "you swore before God and man 'to love, to honour, to protect her!'—Have you fulfilled any one of those promises!—Have you not, on the contrary, in bold defiance of them all, cast from you the poor fragile plaything so soon as she ceased by novelty to please, and at last driven her, by unkindness,—by insult even to desperation! Yes, it was *you* who hurried her to her ruin;—it was *you* who forced her on to the brink of destruction. But Heaven itself interposed, and preserved from pollution its loveliest work. Your wife is spotless—innocent; one moment of thoughtless madness—for which you yourself are answerable—is all that can be laid to her charge. Her heart, her mind, herself, is pure:—Praises to God they are so!

"I have not done yet," continued Trevelyan eagerly, and grasping Lord Herbert's arm as he saw he was in impatience about to interrupt him. "One word more: this unvalued, this wronged, this lovely being, still loves you;—that heart which was given to you in all the fervour of youthful passion still beats for you alone,—for you, who have been so unworthy of the precious gift."

"Lord Launceston," exclaimed Lord Herbert, no longer able to contain his feelings, "you go too far: you *do* not, you *cannnot*, know *my* provocations, *my* excuses."

"I know all," hastily interrupted Trevelyan, "and I must frankly tell you, in order to save all useless discussions on the subject, that one word of your wife's would have more weight with me than the most solemn asseverations from—any other human being.—Every one may read the history of her heart and life; it is indeed her very artlessness of character which has hurried on her fate. Oh, Lord Herbert, I again adjure you, by the love you

Digitized by Google

once professed for her,—by that God who registered the vows by which you bound yourself to her,—not to lose a moment in making all the reparation still in your power. The spark of life is not yet extinguished; who knows what the prospect of returning happiness,—what the mercy of Heaven may yet effect! Go to her; speak to her the kind words of affection; it will be no hard matter to obtain her forgiveness, for her stricken heart will itself plead in your behalf. But I charge you, be kind, be gentle!—one harsh word of recrimination, and you may have to answer even for her life."

Trevelyan stopped. Lord Herbert appeared for a minute at a loss in what manner to reply; he felt involuntarily abashed before one whose superiority he was forced to acknowledge to himself, and he also in his heart could not but allow the justice of his words.

After a moment's pause, therefore, and addressing Trevelyan in a somewhat subdued tone. "From no one but yourself, Lord Launceston," said he, "would I have borne all that I have now patiently listened to, nor would I at any other time have submitted to such language even from you; moreover, I really cannot so far renounce all justice to myself as to allow your representations to be at all correct. But I have not, believe me, any wish either to waste time in explanations—to which, indeed," he added, with returning haughtiness of manner, "you have done me the honour to say you would not give much credence—so we will let all that pass. It is perfectly *natural*," he continued with a sarcastic smile, "that Lady Herbert's story should have most weight with your Lordship, therefore I will not intrude mine upon your attention; and, to put an end at once to this most painful and useless discussion, I request you will be so good as to apprise her of my arrival, (should you judge her situation to require such precautionary notice,) and tell her that I beg for a few minute's conversation."

Trevelyan did not move, nor make any immediate reply: he feared he had by his own vehemence added to the already irritated state of Lord Herbert's feelings, and

Digitized by Google

as at that moment his only desire was to conciliate him towards his wife, he judged it would be advisable to endeavour to soothe him before an interview took place on which he felt so much depended. Addressing him therefore in an altered tone, "You must forgive me, Lord Herbert," said he, holding out his hand towards him, "if I have been betrayed into any undue warmth of expression; but you must make allowances for the feelings of a friend—a parent!"

Again an ironical smile crossed Lord Herbert's features; he did not appear to observe the hand which had been extended towards him, and taking no sort of notice of Trevelyan's apology, he merely made sign that he wished, without further delay, to repair to his wife's apartment. Trevelyan thought it best to push the matter no farther just then, and hoping much from the effect which he fancied the sight of Theresa could not fail to produce, he opened the door which led into the sick chamber, and, followed by Lord Herbert, slowly entered.

Humphries directly left her place at her bedside, and coming up to him, "My lady has been quite quiet for the last hour," said she; "I do not, however, think she is asleep, for it seems to be more like stupor, occasioned, probably, by the draughts she has taken; but still I think she is more comfortable, and more like herself."

Trevelyan approached the bed, and drawing aside the curtain, as he leant over her, he addressed Theresa by her name; but she did not move, or speak.—"Lady Herbert," he repeated in a firmer voice, "would you see your husband if he were to come?" Still no answer, and her eyes remained closed; but by the restless motion of her hand, which was lying at her side, it was evident it was not sleep which thus benumbed her faculties. Again Trevelyan spoke to her. "Theresa, your husband is come; will you not see him?" But again his words were totally unheeded, and Trevelyan, turning towards Lord Herbert, cast on him an involuntary look of reproach as the cause of the melancholy spectacle before them.

Digitized by Google

It was one which appalled and roused even the hardened libertine: he approached the bed, looked at Theresa for a minute aghast, and then in a low tremulous voice addressed her by an endearing appellation once familiar to her ears.

That name—that voice—the voice of him who had been the object of her youthful passion, at once penetrated through the mist of fever and the stupor of debility. She raised her head from the pillow, and gazing wildly at her husband—"It is he! it is Herbert himself!" she exclaimed, with an hysteric scream, and burst into one of those dreadful fits of laughter, occasioned by overwrought feelings on an exhausted frame.

It was Trevelyan's arm which then supported the poor convulsed Theresa! It was *his* hand which chafed her clammy temples, for, horror-struck at the sight before him, a feeling of remorse seemed, for a minute, totally to overpower Lord Herbert, and he stood motionless, gazing on his victim. Her hysteric cries by degress subsided, and when sufficiently recovered to be again aware of the presence of him, the sight of whom had so violently affected her, Lord Herbert again spoke to her.

"Theresa!" said he, in a low subdued tone, "will you forget the past? Can you forgive me?"

"Forgive you!" she exclaimed, a ray of light appearing for an instant to illume her countenance, and a flush of joy to tinge her faded cheek. "Oh! dear, dear Herbert!" and throwing herself forward, she fell nearly senseless on his breast.

For a moment Lord Herbert seemed moved to tenderness; he pressed her to his heart, and kissed her pale face; but as her feeble hands—unable to retain her hold—fell powerless from his neck, which they had clasped, he disengaged himself from her arms, and laying her head on the pillow, gradually withdrew his hand from her grasp. Still, however, he continued for some time to stand by the bedside, watching her in silence; but as she had again relapsed into a state of nervous agitation, nearly amounting to hysterics, and had evidently lost all

Digitized by Google

consciousness of his presence, he at length proposed leaving the apartment until she was more composed, and better fitted for conversation.

Trevelyan acquiesced, and hoping that he read in his softened manner indications of returning feeling, he kindly held out his hand towards him. Lord Herbert did not now reject it, but said nothing, and immediately after left the room.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IX.

My fainting sister,—why despair?
  Why think thy voice has lost its power?
The Saviour bends to hear the prayer
  That's whisper'd at the parting hour.

What though beneath a guilty load
  Thy bowing, trembling spirit groans;
The blood that from Immanuel flow'd,
  For sin deplored, renounced, atones.

Lord Herbert had once loved Theresa, as he thought, devotedly; that is to say, her extraordinary beauty and fascinating manners had for a time captivated his imagination, even to the temporary exclusion of every other object; but he was totally incapable of any deeper or more lasting sentiment of the heart, and had eagerly sought her in marriage, because it was by marriage alone that his momentary but headstrong passion could be gratified. The fortune she brought him was also no small attraction to one disposd to such expensive pleasures as those to which Lord Herbert was then addicted, and would, he thought, in a great measure compensate for the degree of thraldom which matrimony might entail. This transient passion for his lovely bride lasted no longer than while she possessed the power to charm by novelty. The unvalued toy was then thrown aside, and her very steadiness of affection, acting as a constant reproach, irritated, instead of recalling his wandering feelings.

The pernicious society into which they were soon after thrown, during their long residence in France—at that period of moral degradation which followed the Revolution—completed the destruction of Theresa's domestic happiness. Lord Herbert then plunged without restraint into every species of dissipation and vice; and his ne-

Digitized by Google

glected wife, thus driven by bitter disappointment to seek an oblivion for her sorrows amid the bewildering pleasures of Paris, was easily allured into the society of those with whom any intercourse seemed contamination, and whose licence of manners gave to her own conduct an *appearance* of culpability, from the reality of which, however, she was effectually preserved by her ardent love for her husband.

Lord Herbert, the while engrossed by his own pursuits, was too indifferent to be at the trouble of watching her conduct or reading her feelings; and callous even with regard to her virtue, where its sacrifice would have entailed no personal disgrace upon *himself*, he abandoned her without remorse to her fate; and it may even be doubted whether, on their return to purer morals and stricter manners in a country where he was, in a degree, called upon to assume the dignity of a husband, he would in his *heart* have resented that injury to his honor which might have been the means of restoring him to more entire liberty. In the present instance, however, he was well aware that, to take up the matter with a high hand, would be but to raise an universal cry against himself, as any investigation must expose the culpability of his own conduct rather than that of his wife. He, therefore, under this conviction, thought it would be prudent to go through the forms of an explation and reconciliation with Lascelles; and openly declaring himself to be perfectly satisfied, he at length so far overcame his pride as to attend Lord Launceston's summons.

How far the sight of his once-loved, dying Theresa touched his heart, so as to effect any real change of feeling towards her, may be doubtful; but for a time it shook his nerves; and after passing above an hour in all the horrors of a startled upbraiding conscience, he hastily left the house, in the hope of finding some temporary distraction to his perturbed thoughts, amid the busy stir of life.

Towards evening Theresa to a degree rallied; and Humphries informing Trevelyan that she appeared to be quite collected, and had named both him and Lord Her-

Digitized by Google

bert, he immediately went in search of the latter, but to his vexation found that he had left the house. Trevelyan, without loss of time, sent messengers in all diretions for him, and then, with a feeling of revived hope, which he had not courage to check, he repaired to Theresa's apartment.

As soon as she heard his footsteps, she looked anxiously towards the door. Trevelyan well knew whom it was that her eyes thus eagerly sought, and, hastening up to her,—"Lord Herbert," said he, "is not at this minute in the house, but he will soon be here, for I have sent to hasten his return." She looked at him for a minute in silence, then holding out her feeble hand, while tears started into her eyes. "*You* never leave me," said she; "*you* are always kind to me." Trevelyan, too much affected to speak, merely pressed her hand in reply. Her pulse was fluttering and uncertain, and the doctor's sad fore-warnings again forced themselves on his mind, and chilled his blood.

He sat down by the bed-side, and after watching her for a few minutes in silence, encouraged by the calm collected expression of her countenance, "Theresa!" said he in a tremulous voice, "now that you have had time for reflection, and are reconciled to your husband, is there not another with whom you would wish to be at peace?"

"Another! whom?" said she wildly; "what do you mean?"

"I mean, that surely you must wish to be at peace with yourself—with your God!"

She started from her pillow with a degree of nervous energy, of which he had scarcely thought her enfeebled body capable, and looking him fixedly in the face,—"What do you mean?" she again repeated, "Is it really then as I have fancied—am I dying?" and her whole frame trembled with agitation as she spoke.

"Calm yourself, dearest," said Trevelyan,—his own voice and manner at the moment little according with the injunction he gave; "I did not talk of dying. But would nothing except the approach of death make you wish to be reconciled to your best friend—to your benefactor?"

Digitized by Google

Theresa appeared scarcely to heed, or indeed, to comprehend him, her thoughts being wholly occupied by the first impression which they had received.

"It is hard to die so young!" she murmured, "and when Herbert is again kind to me—when I might again be so happy!—to leave all!"

"Has this world afforded you so much of enjoyment, Theresa," continued Trevelyan in a faltering voice, "that you feel such reluctance at the idea of leaving it? Have your hopes, your expectations, your dreams of happiness been hitherto so well fulfilled? Have you met with so much of love and kindness as to make you willing to forego your hopes of heaven for the very best which this life can bestow?"

"God knows I have not," she replied with energy—"not at least since I left *you;*" and she again pressed his hand, while a weak convulsive sob rose to her throat. "But—but I cannot die now!" she continued;—"I dare not—I am not prepared for death!" and she shuddering, closed her eyes, as if to avoid the bewildering recollections which pressed upon her awe-struck mind. "At all events, if it is indeed come to this!" she after a minute continued in a wild reckless tone,—"if my doom is fixed, there is no use in forestalling my misery by dwelling on it, as there is nothing left for me now but to meet my fate as boldly as I can; for it is vain to attempt to expiate all my numberless faults; I remember nothing—I can think of nothing, all is confusion—horrible confusion! I see but a mass of folly, wilful folly, and wickedness, and my mind is totally unequal to recalling the actions of one day, even of one hour!"

"Dearest, dearest Theresa!" resumed Trevelyan, in a still more soothing tone, "for Heaven's sake be calm, and listen to me. A whole life of penitence, were it now granted, would not enable you to blot out, or atone for, one single sin of which you have been guilty; nor would years of self-examination recall one hundredth part of your offences in the sight of God, for they are more in number than the hairs of your head; but were they multiplied tenfold, were they of the deepest die, still they

Digitized by Google

might become white as snow, for there is one who has taken those sins on himself—there is one who has already endured that punishment which they have merited—one who will reconcile you to an offended judge. Oh! Theresa, in confiding faith, in contrition, in gratitude, throw yourself on the mercy, trust to the merits, to the mediation of that all-powerful friend and saviour. Convinced, as you must be—as, thank God, you seem to be—that you dare not offer one plea in excuse for your offences, that in justice you have nothing whatever to look to, but a fearful condemnation: apply to Him who died for you; to Him, who said to the contrite sinner, 'Thy faith has saved thee!'—who answered the petition of the dying thief with those blessed words, 'To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise!' Oh, Theresa! that same merciful Saviour is now waiting to welcome you; he is now saying to you, 'I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins; return to me, for I have redeemed thee.' Fearlessly then, poor prodigal child, go to that heavenly Father who now opens the arms of his mercy towards you—apply to Him who is mighty to save!"

While Trevelyan thus spoke, Theresa's countenance had evidently undergone a change; the knit brow of fearful agony and desperation was smoothed; and she again opened her eyes and raised them with an earnest expression towards heaven. "Can all this be really true?" said she in a hollow voice—"Is there hope even for me, miserable sinner that I am!"

"There is more than hope," continued Trevelyan with increased fervour; "there is even certainty for the real penitent, for that same Saviour has said, 'Whosoever cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out, for my blood has power to cleanse from all iniquity!'"

A bright smile of former days for an instant flashed across Theresa's altered features, the feeble hand pressed in Trevelyan's moved as if struggling for liberty. "Pray for me—help me," she faintly murmured, and clasped her hands together. Trevelyan sank on his knees at the bed-

Digitized by Google

side and prayed aloud, Theresa the while appearing to be attentively following every word he uttered.

He prayed long and fervently, and still her lips moved, still her languid eyes were raised to heaven, while tears stole slowly down her cheeks; but insensibly her hands unclasped and sank motionless on the bed. Trevelyan gazed on her with fearful agony; there was still a pulse, but it was like the last flare of an expiring flame, and her breath came quick and short.

At that minute Trevelyan heard footsteps behind him, and turning hastily round he beheld Lord Herbert standing at the door, uncertain whether to enter. Trevelyan made sign to him to approach. "Is she worse?" he enquired with a look of horror, on observing that Theresa's altered countenance had already assumed the sharpness of death. "Has she mentioned me?"

Trevelyan did not answer, indeed, did not appear even to hear him, and continued in silent anguish, straining his eyes to catch every remaining symptom of animation.

In a minute or two Theresa again seemed to rally, and extending one of her hands towards Trevelyan, "Dear friend!" said she, "are you there? Do not leave me now!" He clasped her hand in his, and then in a tremulous voice addressing her,

"Yes, Theresa, I am here; and there is another also here—your husband."

"Herbert! dear Herbert!" she exclaimed with energy: "Where? for my eyes are grown so dim I see nothing."

Trevelyan caught hold of Lord Herbert's hand, and placed Theresa's in it; a bright smile once more came over her whitened lips, and her whole remaining strength appeared concentrated in the convulsive grasp with which she seized her husband's hand. "Thank God! thank God!" she cried with fervour, and again struggled hard for breath.

"Is there any thing you would wish to say to me, Theresa?" said Lord Herbert, in a tone of kindness.

She did not answer—and every deep-drawn sigh seemed her last. Trevelyan, beside himself, and totally regardless of the presence of her husband, addressed her

Digitized by Google

by the most endearing appellations, as if in the fond hope of retaining that life which he saw was fast ebbing away. "Theresa! dearest, best beloved—speak to me—once more speak to me."

"God bless and reward you!" she murmured in a low voice: "I feel there is hope—peace—peace!"

These were the last words which came from her convulsed lips—the hard heavings of her bosom gradually subsided, until they became so faint as scarcely to be perceptible—her eyes were still raised to heaven, but they had assumed the blue glassiness of death—after a short struggle, the startling death-rattle was heard in her throat—and all was over.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XIII.

He gazed! how long we gaze despite of pain
And know—but dare not own—we gaze in vain.
The long dark lashes fringed her lids of snow
And veiled—thought shrinks from all that lurk'd below.
'Tis o'er the eye death most exerts his might,
And hurls the spirit from her throne of light. BYRON.

WHO has been so rarely blessed, as to need to be told of the dreadful hours of stupor which follow the first burst of agony on the loss of a beloved object? The same deadly blow which deprived Theresa of life, seemed to have struck Trevelyan as it passed. His thoughts became vacant, his feelings seemed benumbed, his very existence palsied! How often, in the first wild ravings of grief, is the rebellious mind tempted impiously to demand why such an annihilation cannot indeed take place, when two heads which have beat with the same moral pulse are thus severed? Why, on the contrary, the wretched survivor seems then, by the intensity of his suffering, to have concentrated in himself the vital energy of both. It is religion's voice which can alone reply to such vain complaints, and silence the murmurer with the words of inspiration.

"Why dost thy heart carry thee away that thou turnest thy spirit against God, for he giveth not account of any of his matters?"

When the violence of his grief at length forced back Trevelyan's mind to the consciousness of his loss, he fell upon his knees—for never before had he so needed, and never before so much felt the consolations of his religion—his imagination fondly rested on that smile, that bright gleam of hope which had seemed to visit Theresa's parting soul; on those blessed words of peace which had

Digitized by Google

escaped from her dying lips—and he felt as if never until that moment he had known the full value of a Christian's faith.

And who will venture to say that his faith was visionary, his hopes unfounded? Who will dare limit the mercy of Omnipotence? Who, in short, will deny to God the right "to do as he will with his own."

The deluded sceptic, while enjoying the security of earthly prosperity, may, in fancied independence of reason, resist those revealed truths at which his pride revolts; but when bereaved of what he best loved on earth, he is at once forced from his strong holds of human wisdom, and in his bewildered anxiety for another, unwittingly turns to those Christian hopes and views which he had hitherto carelessly rejected for himself. He can now no longer dispute the doctrine of an irresistible Omnipotence, when, by his loss, it is thus brought powerfully home to his heart, and led by degrees to the contemplation of a future world of retribution; those cries to heaven which were at first but the ravings of a rebellious heart, became the humble prayers of a convicted sinner; and he is at length brought to seek in the word of revelation for that blessed passport to heaven by which alone his anxious solicitude for the lost object of his earthly affections can be soothed, or any prospect of salvation opened to himself.

Trevelyan's mind did not fully awake to the dreadful certainty of what had befallen him, until the first rays of the morning sun burst into his apartment, till he heard the cheerful chirpings of the birds around the windows, and the usual stir of life reviving about his dwelling. At these familiar sounds his blood crept in his veins!—this world was thus continuing in its accustomed course—the hours were following each other in their usual succession, and bringing with them their wonted business and pleasure, while eternity had opened to that being in whom he now felt his own existence had been but too much concentrated. He rose abruptly from his seat to endeavour to check the rebellious thoughts which rushed upon his soul, and hastily shutting out the bright beams which seemed to insult him with their cheerfulness, he for some

Digitized by Google

time, paced the apartment with hurried steps, until having at last, to a degree, tutored his feelings, he resolved at once to force his bewildered mind back to his own present situation, and to his still remaining interests and duties in life as a husband and father.

At the idea of the first of those sacred ties, he involuntarily shuddered, but allowing himself no farther time for thought, he sat down and informed Augusta of the tragical event which had taken place, again intreating that the unfortunate animosity which had of late existed between them, should be now for ever buried in the grave of her who had occasioned it; and without entering into any explanation, he proposed a mutual forgetfulness and forgiveness of the past—he ended by saying, that unless he found he could be of any use to Lord Herbert by remaining where he then was, he should return to Cheshunt that night. He also wrote to Sir Henry Williams, and having sent off a messenger with these two letters, he addressed a few lines to Lord Herbert, whom he did not yet feel himself equal personally to encounter, petitioning that Theresa's remains might be deposited by the side of his sister's at Richmond, and requesting him to give orders to that effect.

After having exerted himself to write these necessary letters, Trevelyan again sank into his former trance of grief, and the hours passed by him without his taking any cognizance of their progress.

The tortures of anxiety are hard to bear, but the dead pause which follows that agonizing excitement, is perhaps still worse.

He was at last roused out of his stupor by hearing a knock at his door. He started from his seat, and although in the bewildered state of his mind he could not probably have accounted to himself for the panic which then came over him, or have told whom, or what, his imagination had conjured up, he stood for a minute at the door, fearful to withdraw the bolt, while his every pulse throbbed. Another knock, and his own name pronounced in a gentle voice, which he immediately recognised to be that of Humphries, recalled his wandering senses, by touching

Digitized by Google

that hitherto overstrained string in his heart, and turning the lock, he bade her enter.

"I have brought you this, my Lord," said she, after having again carefully closed and secured the door; and she held out to Trevelyan Theresa's bag, and a folded-up piece of paper. As she gave it, he caught hold of the faithful creature's hand, and endeavoured to express his thanks for all her services, but he could not speak, and Humphries' tears showed how well she comprehended his silence. "I have brought you this too, my Lord," she added, laying down a key on the table by him; "if you thought you had courage for the sight, I would really advise you to go once more into the room.—I am sure it would do you good—it is so calm—so beautiful!"

"I understand you," said Trevelyan; "it is my intention," and he hastily concealed the key.

"I hope, my Lord," she continued, "I may be allowed to remain here to the last."

"It is my anxious desire," replied Trevelyan. "Lord Herbert will give all necessary orders, and I shall meet you at Richmond on Tuesday."

As soon as Humphries had left him, Trevelyan, with a trembling hand, opened Theresa's bag; in it was still that long cherished letter from her husband, containing his first protestations of eternal love, and his own broken bracelet, to which she had so often alluded as to her safeguard. At the sight of this trinket, which brought back so much to his recollection, tears at last came to his relief, and he sat gazing on it in the softened luxury of grief. He then opened the paper which Humphries had also given him: within it he found the long glossy curls which he had so often admired clustering round her lovely face. The ringlets had still a look of life that made him shudder, and he hastily closed the paper, and removed it from his sight.

When evening began to draw in, and all seemed quiet in the house, Trevelyan left his apartment;—he stopped and listened on reaching the passage,—but not a sound was to be heard, and he hurried on. Again he paused before the door of that room which contained what he

Digitized by Google

had best loved on earth; then hastily unlocking it, he darted in,—again turned the key inside,—and was alone in the chamber of death!

He for some time leant against the door gasping for breath, without courage to approach the bed. At length his eyes stole fearfully towards it. At the first sight of the colourless face, white as the sheet on which it lay, the blood forsook his heart, and he averted his head in horror. Again and again he looked; and at last was able to gaze attentively on the beloved features, fixed like marble!—on that form whose ever varying graceful lines he had so often watched in admiration, and which was now stretched before him in the rigidity of death!

Trevelyan gradually approached the bed, and by degrees his eyes and nerves became so familiarized to the spectacle before him that he at length experienced a degree of soothing gratification in the sight. No chisel had ever carved features so perfect!—There was still a smile on her parted lips, and the calm expression of her smooth brow seemed to proclaim peace within. The first natural instinct of horror had now entirely died away; he felt as if he was contemplating, not indeed Theresa!—not that animated being in whose eyes he had delighted to read every feeling of her ardent soul, but a beautiful sepulchral monument of herself!

Once, and but once, when parting with her on her wedding-day, his lips had pressed that lovely forehead, and now, when parting with her for ever, he would once more claim that privilege of affection which death seemed again to have restored to him.

With a beating heart he stooped down, but at the first touch of the icy-cold face he started away in horror. Life recoils from such unnatural contact with death, and the warm blood curdles at the slightest touch of that beloved hand which but a few hours before would have been pressed with rapture to the doating heart.

Trevelyan's soothing illusion was instantly dispelled. Theresa! his once adored Theresa! had now on a sudden become to him almost an object of disgust! His head grew dizzy—he rushed to the door, and, as if pur-

Digitized by Google

sued by some appalling phantom, never stopped or drew breath until he reached his own apartment.

All was now over!—his melancholy task was finished! and feeling that inaction no longer suited the roused, agitated state of his nerves, that he could not endure to pass even another hour under that hated roof, he resolved on immediately setting off for Cheshunt. He accordingly ordered his carriage, and wrote a few words to Lord Herbert, requesting an interview with him before his departure.

When in consequence Trevelyan was before long summoned to his apartment, he found Lord Herbert extended on the couch, pale and haggard. The instant Trevelyan entered he started up, and endeavoured to move towards him, but was obliged to catch hold of the mantel piece for support, and was evidently too much overpowered by feelings of some sort to be able to speak, Trevelyan hastened up to him, kindly taking his hand, and for a few minutes both were silent. At length, summoning all his resolution, "Lord Herbert," said he, "I have brought you what I am sure you will value," and he laid down by him the folded paper containing Theresa's hair, in which he had also inserted that letter of her husband's so long preserved by her.

Still Lord Herbert said nothing: his senses appeared to be totally benumbed; and on raising his eyes towards the marble slab against which he was leaning, Trevelyan was no longer at a loss to account for this strange stupefaction, as he there saw a half-emptied bottle of laudanum, to which the self-convicted murderer had evidently had recourse, in the vain hope of thus silencing the upbraidings of his startled conscience. With what feelings of commiseration did Trevelyan then look on the wretched victim of thoughtlessness and vice, and how gratefully did he return thanks to Heaven for the blessing of those hopes which had saved himself under sufferings equally acute, from seeking the same alleviation.

"Here is yet something else which belongs to you," continued Trevelyan, as with a trembling hand he held out Theresa's wedding-ring. The instant Lord Herbert

Digitized by Google

beheld it, he uttered a deep groan, and, shuddering, pushed Trevelyan's hand away. But on observing him about to enclose the ring with the hair, he again suddenly roused himself, and seizing it eagerly placed it on Trevelyan's finger, muttering incoherently, "It is yours—you alone were worthy of her; keep it for her sake—I dare not——" and then making sign that he wished to be left alone, he again leant down his head on the mantelpiece, while lowly muttered complaints seemed almost unconsciously to himself to break from his oppressed bosom.

"We meet at Richmond—on Tuesday," said Trevelyan, grasping his hand, while, in his tender pity for the conscience-stricken libertine, he at that moment felt half inclined to propose remaining with him until that trying day was over.

And regretting now the additional agony which the sight of his own self-condemning letter might occasion him, Trevelyan endeavoured again to get possession of the packet in order to remove it; but Lord Herbert, who probably guessed at part of its contents, observing his intention immediately caught at it, and thrusting the paper into his bosom, again made sign to Trevelyan to depart, and sunk back half fainting on the couch, stammering out, "farewell till Tuesday."

Trevelyan immediately summoned his servant, giving him strict orders not to leave his master until he was more composed, and also to remove the laudanum out of his sight: he then, without allowing himself to think on all he was for ever quitting, hurried down stairs, and was in a minute on his road to Cheshunt.

It was dark long before he reached his destination, and having been entirely engrossed by the parting scene with Lord Herbert, he had not dwelt on the approaching interview with his wife, nor had even observed his progress, until he was startled by the carriage suddenly stopping at the door of his own house.

The servant rang twice before any one appeared, and to Trevelyan's surprise, he saw no lights, nor symptom of movement about the dwelling; at last, the door was

Digitized by Google

opened by a woman, and after a short parley with her, his servant returned to the carriage, bringing the intelligence that Lady Launceston and all the family had set out for Cornwall early that morning.

Although this sudden departure proved that Augusta still continued in the same hostile disposition towards him, yet at the moment Trevelyan felt her absence as a relief; he had now at least some days reprieve before his dreaded meeting with her, and as they were involuntary on his part, he felt the less remorse at welcoming them as such. He immediately quitted the carriage, and the servant who had been left in the house, and who presuming on his little expected return had also absented himself, being at last found, Trevelyan learnt from him that Lady Launceston had left Cheshunt just half an hour before the arrival of his messenger, and as she had mentioned that his Lordship would not probably be home for some time, not knowing where to apply for orders respecting it, the letter had been forwarded to Cornwall by post.

Trevelyan had scarcely left his sleepless bed the next morning, when his servant announced Sir Henry Williams, and in an instant the kind old man was in his arms. It was some time before he could speak, and when he did, he gave vent to his feelings, in words of such touching sorrow, at the melancholy fate of his departed favourite, that they happily, by strongly affecting Trevelyan, forced from him those outward signs of suffering which can alone relieve the oppressed heart, and to which he had hitherto been unable to give way.

"And so I find my Lady has flown," said Sir Henry, as soon as his thoughts could be diverted from Theresa. —"Well, perhaps it is all the better she should be away just now; and I give you notice I am going to take you home with me forthwith. I will listen to no objections," said he, observing Trevelyan was about to remonstrate; "you will do exactly as you please when you are under my roof, but here you shall not remain alone another hour. I, too, mean to be at Richmond next Tuesday, so

Digitized by Google

we will go together, and I am resolved on not losing sight of you till then."

Trevelyan could not reject such kindness; he therefore spent the five following days with his considerate friend, and early on Tuesday morning they together set off on their melancholy expedition to Richmoud.

Not a word passed between them on the road; and it was only by the additional paleness of Trevelyan's cheek, and the nervous shake of his hand, as they drew near the place of their destination, that he betrayed the suffering of his mind.

They drove straight to Mr. Rivers's house. Lord Herbert was there already. He and Trevelyan both shuddered on meeting, and for a moment neither had courage to accost the other; but Lord Herbert overcoming his agitation, at length went up to him, and with a softened expression on his countenance, held out his hand —Trevelyan took it, but in silence, and nothing more passed between them, for they were almost immediately summoned to leave the house, and in a few minutes Trevelyan found himself following Theresa's lifeless remains to that same churchyard, where, but two months before, he had supported her in his arms when fainting, by his sister's grave.

We will not attempt to describe the feelings of any present at that dreadful ceremony. Indeed, Trevelyan's were of a nature to render him scarcely sensible of what passed, and it was not till all was over, and that on his return to the vestry, the kind words of Mr. Rivers roused him from his stupor of grief, that he seemed even conscious where he was. He then looked with fearful agony into the church where the burial service had just been performed, where he had so lately knelt at Theresa's side, where her bridal form seemed still to stand, and where he could fancy her nuptial vow still vibrated. He shuddering, turned away, and totally overpowered by his emotion, threw himself into that very seat in which he had placed her on the day of his sister's funeral.

Mr. Rivers left him for a time to his grief, for he well knew there are moments when the sickened soul refuses

Digitized by Google

all comfort, although well tutored where alone to seek it. When Trevelyan at length became composed, he found Lord Herbert was gone, and could but feel thankful at being thus spared a parting scene with one whom christian charity bade him commiserate, but towards whom his very blood at that moment curdled, as the murderer of Theresa, and the being who had wantonly blighted his own existence, by first winning, and then destroying her on whom it hung.

After taking the kindest leave of his excellent friend, Sir Henry Williams, and of Mr. Rivers, and once more visiting alone Theresa's still open grave, Trevelyan set off for Cornwall. He hastily drew down the blinds, and flung himself into the back of the carriage to avoid the sight of the many well-known objects, which would necessarily force such painful recollections on his mind; but as he passed over the bridge, he could not resist the desire once more to look on those scenes which were now become hallowed in his imagination.

It was by this time evening, and the setting sun was reflected in sheets of gold on the windows of what but a few weeks back, had been his sister's dwelling; her favourite catalpa-tree was in full blossom—the meadows and gardens were bright with the usual flowery decorations of summer, and at that very instant two or three gaily-freighted pleasure-boats, followed by a band of music, passed through the arches of the bridge below.

How unbearable are such signs of life and enjoyment to one who, by some dreadful recent loss, has been deprived of that which made life bright. It seemed to Trevelyan as if he was now leaving one half of his existence buried in Theresa's grave, and his rebellious mind as yet refused to turn with hope or anticipations of future comfort to those interests of home and country which still remained to him.

Alas! the emotions which shook his soul when now approaching that home, were not those of love or joy—and ashamed of their nature, shocked at their cause, he aggravated his sufferings by self-accusation; for he was but too well aware, that agonizing as had been his feel-

Digitized by Google

ings, when following the slow funeral procession to Theresa's grave, they were of a less poignant nature than those which he now experienced, when, at the end of his tedious journey, the drivers put spurs to their tired horses, and whirled him rapidly through the lodge and park which led to Trevelyan Castle.

Who that is blessed with a happy home with which every feeling of peace, love, and joy are identified!—who that knows the delight of being ever fondly welcomed to it by the radiant smile of affection, but must feel for Trevelyan when entering the abode which bore that sacred title to him, but from which all happiness and sympathy seemed now to be for ever banished.

He had apprised Lady Launceston of his intended arrival that afternoon—the servants appeared to be in consequence expecting him; and he learned in answer to his nervously anxious inquiries, that her Ladyship was at home, that all the family was well, and that there was no company in the house. But still, when he reached the usual sitting-room, to which he had immediately hurried, and where he hoped certainly to find his wife, and at once to get over that first dreaded meeting, he, to his disappointment, found it empty. He directly proceeded to the library, thinking the same anxiety for a speedy interview must actuate Lady Launceston's mind, and that she would doubtless be awaiting him there; but his agitated feelings again received a chill, for still no Augusta appeared; and he was about to seek her in her own apartment, when Griffith returning, informed him that he had apprised her Ladyship of his arrival, and that she would join him directly.

"Is she in her own room?—alone?" inquired Trevelyan, in an agitated voice.

"No, my Lady is in the school-room," replied the servant; "but she bid me say she would be down immediately."

Trevelyan paced the apartment in most painful perturbation; he could hardly believe it was little more than a fortnight since he and Augusta had parted, so much appeared to have happened to him during the time—so

Digitized by Google

much had occurred to make them more than strangers to each other.

At length he heard footsteps approach; he recognised the voices of his children—the door opened—and Augusta, with the two boys, entered.

The only symptom of agitation visible in Lady Launceston's appearance, was an unusual flush on her cheeks, and an odd fixed expression in her countenance. Trevelyan went up to her, and held out his hand; she took it —but calmly and coldly, and relinquished it almost instantly, the colour still deepening in her face. There was also an almost imperceptible hesitation in her voice when she began to speak, but this slight embarrassment, which in any one else could not have been dignified with the title of emotion, she, in a moment overcame, and began directly to make the usual inquiries relative to his journey, where he passed the preceding night, and how he had found the roads.

Trevelyan's nerves had been of late so violently shaken, and his health had, in consequence, been so much affected, that, exhausted by the fatigue of his journey, by the many sleepless nights he had lately passed, and the agitation of his present meeting with his wife, he felt totally overpowered; his head became giddy and confused, and he hastily sank into the nearest chair. Augusta, who could not help observing her husband's disordered looks, directly rung the bell, and left the room in order to hasten the servant with the necessary restoratives.

The children, meanwhile, climbed upon their father's knee. "Papa, dear papa!" cried St. Ives; "you have not yet kissed me, and me so glad to see dear papa!" and the child clasped his little arms round his neck, addressing him by the most endearing appellations.

"Blessings on you, dear boy," said Trevelyan, in a tremulous voice, as he fervently kissed his rosy cheek; and it was from the very bottom of his heart the blessing came, for the child's fond caresses, and the recollections which they immediately brought to his mind, had forced from him most welcome tears.

"Poor papa has got a bad cold in his eyes," said St.

Digitized by Google

Ives, brushing away with his little hands the large drops which had slowly stolen down his father's face; "but he will soon get well here, for St. Ives and mamma will nurse him, and now me is quite well, we will have such fun! shan't we papa? and John has got the poneys all ready, and we will go and see aunt Treevy." The boy stopped short, colouring crimson as he suddenly recollected that aunt Treevy was now a forbidden subject, while Trevelyan gave a deep convulsive sigh.

"Would you wish to have dinner put off?" said Augusta, in her usual composed manner, as soon as she saw that her husband had overcome his first agitation; "for it is now near six, and I suppose, of course you wish to change your dress?"

"Oh, no, make no alteration, if that is your usual hour, I shall be quite ready," replied Trevelyan; and, with an effort, rising from his seat, he followed his wife up stairs.

"I conclude you have received *both* my letters?" said he, in a low voice, as they reached the door of his dressing-room.

"Yes," replied Augusta, but made no further comment.

"Me stay with papa?" inquired St. Ives, with a look of anxious entreaty.

"As your papa pleases," said Augusta drily.

"Yes, certainly, dearest," replied Trevelyan, catching up the child in his arms; and he stooped his head down towards him, to conceal the tears which he again felt starting in his eyes.

"Oh papa! what is the black thing put round your hat for?" exclaimed the boy; "is it to make you look fine?"

Trevelyan's sallow cheek instantly crimsoned on recollecting that the crape which had been bound round his hat the morning of Theresa's funeral was still there, and that he still wore the same black clothes. Augusta also coloured as this remark of St. Ives attracted her attention to her husband's deep mourning, but she said nothing, although in that hasty glance their eyes had met, and

Digitized by Google

that she must have read in his an expression which might have pierced the hardest heart. One kind look of sympathy from Augusta would then have had power to restore her husband to her for ever; but her countenance betrayed very different feelings, and without uttering another word, she abruptly left him and passed on to her own apartment.

With their hearts thus hopelessly closed to each other, and with the same chilling constraint of manner, Lord and Lady Launceston again met for dinner, and spent the heavy hours of the evening which then followed, and of many an ensuing day and week.

Augusta continued punctiliously to adhere to her husband's request that the past should be buried in oblivion, but there was in her acquiescence to his wishes such an appearance of self-applause and fancied magnanimity, as if she was at once a suffering martyr and liberal judge, that the natural pride of man rose against such affronting treatment; for Trevelyan plainly saw that his wife considered herself to be the only one aggrieved, and that she was acting with wonderful forbearance in thus receiving him back without a word of reproach, after what she persisted in considering as his open infidelity. And if he might on principle have patiently submitted to such injustice towards himself, he could not where Theresa was concerned. He could not endure any insult to the memory of one whose moral purity he had watched over with a parent's anxiety, and whose virtue had been dearer to him than any felicity this world could have bestowed. The state of irritation which all this produced was unnatural to one of Trevelyan's mild disposition, and he writhed under it, for he was painfully aware that those Christian principles which condemned such feelings were yet not strong enough to overcome them, and his mind turned disgusted from the sight of its own weakness.

Hardly a day passed without his resolving to come to some explanation with Lady Launceston, and to risk any thing rather than continue on the wretched footing now established between them. He even began many a letter to her on the subject, but some chilling repulsive word or

Digitized by Google

action always came to petrify even his angry feelings, and to convince him that it was vain to attempt to speak the language of his heart to one who could not possibly comprehend it.

Poor little St. Ives was his only solace, but even with him his manner soon necessarily grew constrained, as it was evident that he had become an object of jealousy and suspicion to Augusta, who fancied—and she was not far wrong—that it was the child's very decided partiality for Theresa which had given him an additional claim on his father's tenderness.

Resolved at length on ascertaining how far her suspicions were well founded, Lady Launceston one day boldly named "*The pretty* lady" to St. Ives. The boy's face instantly turned crimson, and looking fearfully around, while he put his little finger on his lips, he approached close to his mother's side, and then in a low voice said, "Hush! hush! the pretty lady is dead. St. Ives must never speak of her any more, except when quite alone with papa, and that nobody can hear; but if me is a good boy, papa will take me some day to see where the pretty lady and aunt Treevy are buried."

And then again casting a look of anxiety around the room, for fear any one should overhear him, he crept closer to Augusta, and putting his arm round her neck, whispered in a still lower voice, "One day poor papa cried about the pretty lady just as St. Ives cried about Bully when it was buried under the grass in the garden. Tell me, mamma, was the poor pretty lady laid under the grass like Bully?"

"If your papa has forbidden you to speak about the pretty lady," said Augusta drily, "you had better say no more about her, for remember that little boys should always do what they are bid."

The child's eyes filled with tears at this unexpected rebuke, and he shrunk away abashed from his mother's side.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XIV.

Welcome, rough war, with all thy scenes of blood,
Thy roaring thunders, and thy clashing steel;
Welcome once more. What have I now to do
But play the brave man o'er again and die?—BASIL.

AT the expiration of about six weeks Trevelyan received a letter from Sir Henry Williams, offering to pass a short time with him in Cornwall. He joyfully accepted the proposal, and soon after had the pleasure of seeing his excellent old friend arrive at Trevelyan Castle.

Sir Henry was much shocked at the state of depression in which he found Trevelyan, and at the sad alteration in his looks. His health had never thoroughly recovered from the effects of the wound, which had greatly shaken his nervous system, and the present irritated state of his spirits undermined his bodily strength. Sir Henry, who was by no means slow at observation, soon perceived that it was vain to hope for any improvement in his friend so long as he remained at home, and he therefore immediately suggested change of air and scene. But with the languor natural to a depressed mind, which, having lost all interest in self, can make no exertion for mere personal advantage, Trevelyan at once rejected every plan he proposed. Sir Henry, however, was not to be discouraged, and having talked to Dr. Beattie on the subject, who quite agreed as to the absolute necessity of Lord Launceston attending to his health, he one day renewed the attack when he was present.

"The doctor and I have settled," said Sir Henry, "that you must forthwith make some little excursion from home, so the only question is where you shall go to? for you say your own country affords nothing of sufficient interest to induce you to take so much trouble, and from all others we are unfortunately at present excluded; so

Digitized by Google

what to do with you I don't know, unless, by the bye, you will take a trip to Spain, and pay your friend Sir John Moore, a military sort of visit, such as that which took you to Egypt. You know what a world of good that expedition did you, (all but losing your arm, which you certainly might as well not have done.) I dare say Moore would give you a little work in the way of amusement, just to keep your hand in; for as to joining the army in the regular line of your profession, that is, I suppose, out of the question, for, faith, I believe you are of higher rank in it than himself: but you might accompany him *en amateur*, and you have proved yourself to be no bad assistant in that way."

Trevelyan did not at once reply. This was the first time, however, that he had not immediately brought forward numberless objections to every plan proposed, and encouraged by his silence, Sir Henry returned to the charge, applying to Dr. Beattie for his opinion.

"Really," said the doctor, "I do not think Lord Launceston could do better than pass the ensuing winter in a warmer climate, and as war is mere pastime to him, perhaps what you have suggested will be the very best thing for him, and I shall hope to see his Lordship return to us next spring quite another man, for we cannot allow you more than six months leave of absence," he continued, "as we shall then require your services at home; but a little change and excitement will, I really believe, be more efficacious than all my drugs and science."

Trevelyan's sick mind eagerly caught at this idea, and the first time he was alone with Sir Henry he recurred to it. "The only difficulty," said he, "is in what manner to offer my services."

"You can only do it by some private arrangement between you and your friend Moore," replied Sir Henry; "but considering the intimacy which has now for so long subsisted between you, I see no impropriety in your telling him the exact truth, that your health and spirits need a little fillip; that you would be glad if he could admit you for a short time as one of his military family; and that you will endeavour to make yourself generally useful, as

Digitized by Google

the servants say in their advertisements. At all events there can be no harm in your making the proposal."

Trevelyan saw none either, and it was at length agreed upon between the friends that on Sir Henry's departure from Cornwall he should accompany him to town, in order to find out from the commander-in-chief how far their scheme would be approved of at head-quarters.

The military arrangements which followed need not be dwelt upon. Trevelyan remained in town until he had received a most satisfactory answer from Sir John Moore, who had just then assumed the command in Spain, and who readily agreed to Lord Launceston joining him as supernumery aide-de-camp.

"I will look upon this project of yours as a mere military frisk," said the gallant soldier in his letter, "and will without scruple employ you as my fag, although it is from you that in fact I should take my orders."

Every thing being now finally settled, Trevelyan had but to inform Augusta of his intentions. When he left Cornwall he had merely in general terms talked of business obliging him to repair for a short time to London, and silent acquiescence in whatever her husband proposed, being a part of the present line of conduct which Lady Launceston, in the character of a *victime*, had laid down for herself, she had never inquired what that business might be, nor why it detained him so long. The time for his departure being, however, now actually fixed, as a naval friend of Sir Henry's had offered to take him out in his frigate, Trevelyan lost no time in informing Augusta of his proposed short absence from England.

"It is to be a mere trip," he said in his letter to her, "and I shall certainly be home in the spring, for I am not to have any regular appointment, and may therefore at any time relinquish my voluntary post should any thing make me wish to return to England even sooner than I now intend. So I do not mean to consider this expedition of mine in the light of a separation from home or friends, or to remain any longer than my health may require. He concluded by saying that he intended to leave town in a day or two for Cornwall, as he had

Digitized by Google

not now much time to spare, for Captain Dixon with whom he was to go to Spain, had received orders to sail the end of the following week.

When Trevelyan reached home he found Augusta was absent, having left it two or three days before on a visit to the Priory, to which place he was informed his letter to her had been forwarded. The morning after his arrival he was in consequence meditating riding over to Mr. Penrhyn's, when he received the following answer from Lady Launceston:—

"Your letter, announcing your sudden intention of going abroad, has just reached me; it has certainly surprised me not a little, as you had never even hinted at the possibility of such a project. You are of course in the right to try whatever is recommended for your health, and I sincerely hope that your expedition to Spain may be of all the service to you which you anticipate.

"As you say this is not to be considered in the light of a separation, I cannot help desiring there should be no taking leave, and that as we are now accidently apart, we may not meet for the sole purpose of inflicting pain on each other; for bidding farewell can at no time be agreeable, and, under present circumstances, would be doubly unpleasant to me. If you have any orders to leave, or arrangements to make with me, all that can be settled as well by letter.

"This wish of mine, not to meet previous to your departure, boldly as I have ventured to make it known to you, is of course not to be attended to should it be any gratification to you to see me: with that, however, I can hardly now flatter myself, but will hope that by the time you return to England you may be so far restored by change of scene, as to find your own home no longer pernicious to your health.

"I enclose a few words to Hitchcock relative to my wishes about the children during my absence.

"Yours,

A. LAUNCESTON."

Digitized by Google

Trevelyan was from long experience too well acquainted with his wife's dispositon, to be as much pained or irritated by this answer as he once might have been; for the palsy of indifference had benumbed his feelings as a husband, and any trait of kindness of heart in Augusta, would now have astonished him much more than the absence of such an endearing quality; he however resolved on deferring his reply to this most unsatisfactory epistle till next morning, being doubtful of the spirit in which it might be made.

After reperusing it several times, he at last determined, without entering into any further discussions on the subject, to answer it in person, by repairing immediately to the Priory, and he accordingly after breakfast, mounted his horse for that purpose.

"The ladies are all out," said the servant who came to the door on his arrival, "but Mr. Penrhyn is at home."

Finding he was alone, Trevelyan dismounted, being anxious to have a few minutes conversation with him. These minutes lengthened into hours; for, encouraged by Mr. Penrhyn's friendliness, Trevelyan to a degree, opened his heart to him. Every one had become well aware that he and Lady Launceston had ceased to live on terms of happy cordiality, and as he kept the secret of his sorrows carefully concealed within his own breast, Augusta of course obtained universal pity, and all the blame of their estrangement fell upon him. Trevelyan was therefore glad of an opportunity to vindicate his conduct to one whose judgment and good opinion he valued; and after having explained the motives which induced him to resolve on a temporary absence from home, he alluded to Augusta's desire, that they should not meet previous to his departure.

"I know that is Lady Launceston's wish," said Mr. Penrhyn, "and we must not judge of the feelings of others by their sentiments in that respect, for there are many whose nerves are not equal to the pain of taking leave."

An incredulous smile involuntarily passed over Tre-

Digitized by Google

velyan's features at these words; but he made no comment.

"I will however speak again to her on the subject," continued Mr. Penrhyn, "and let you know whether or not it will be prudent to urge her any further on that head; at all events I should say it would be advisable that I should have a little conversation with her before any interview takes place, for I cannot disguise from you, that your present determination has greatly discomposed her; partly perhaps, because she was not consulted; you will forgive me for speaking so openly," he added with a smile, "but our wives expect, and indeed deserve, that compliment to their judgment and affection."

Trevelyan was silent; his conscience perhaps told him, that Mr. Penrhyn's rebuke was not entirely unjust, but he besides felt that it was impossible, without saying more than he wished, to explain how difficult such confidence would be in his case—"Well," he at length said, with a sigh, "I will be guided by you; you will tell Lady Launceston, that I came here to-day in the hope of prevailing upon her to return home until I set out, which I must do early on Friday morning—but that I will see her again or not, exactly as she prefers."

Trevelyan heard next day from Mr. Penrhyn—Lady Launceston still persevered in her wish not to see her husband before his departure, and Trevelyan now acquiesced without any further remonstrance. He had luckily much business to arrange during the four days he had still to spend at home, which prevented him from dwelling on his domestic sorrows.

When the last evening at length arrived, Trevelyan kept the children with him an hour later than usual, desiring however that they should be left in ignorance of his reason for doing so.

Delighted at being allowed to sit up so long with dear papa, St. Ives and his two playfellows were in the highest spirits, and more than once their loud bursts of joyous gaiety, and their innocent unsuspecting observations on papa's gravity, nearly overcame him. At length they

Digitized by Google

were finally summoned to bed. As he kissed them at parting, he told them, and he told himself, he would see them in the morning; but it was a voluntary deception practised both on the poor children and on himself. As the door closed upon them, and that he still heard their little gay voices on the stairs, tears slowly stole down his cheeks—and the idea that he might possibly never hear those dear voices more, now for the first time darted through his depressed mind.

The last evening at our home, previous to a long absence, whatever may be the object for which we leave it, always casts a gloom over the spirits; and the silence and melancholy of the apartment, after his little companions were gone, struck painfully on Trevelyan's imagination. He immediately sent for the bailiff and steward, giving them different necessary orders, and endeavouring by such employments to divert his mind from the thoughts which unmanned him. While occupied settling various papers, he had occasion to open his writing-case; the first object which met his eyes, was the locket containing Theresa's hair, with the same stained ribbon by which it had been suspended round his neck the day he was wounded at Alexandria. That locket he had ceased to wear on his marriage, and although not forgotten, it had remained untouched with other sacred deposits in the box ever since. He hastily seized it, and giving way to the impulse of the moment, he replaced it where it had so long been treasured—where her image was fixed for ever. Laying beside it in the same drawer were also two letters, which she had written to him in their days of happiness, during one of his absences from Richmond; he read them over and over, then gazing fondly for the last time on her beloved name, he with a sudden effort cast them into the fire.—"I may never return home," thought he, "my weakness must die with me."

As he sat watching the expiring sparks of the consuming paper, his thoughts wandered to his wife, and the very feelings which all these recollections had roused, softening his heart, he felt it would at that moment be a relief to lay it open to Augusta, and thus endeavour to satisfy

Digitized by Google

his own mind, even if he could not hers. It was now growing late; he therefore rung for Griffiths, and desiring that the carriage might be ready at five next morning, and that none of the servants should set up, Trevelyan dismissed him for the night, and remaining alone with his conscience, he after having humbled himself in prayer before the Searcher of all hearts, wrote the following letter to his wife.

"I have complied with your wish, by taking no personal leave of you; but now that I am about to quit my home, perhaps for ever, I cannot refrain from opening my heart to you, as I would on my death-bed; consider my words, therefore, as being those of a dying man, and dismiss from your mind, while reading them, all those angry feelings which have of late unhappily existed between us, but by which, I take Heaven to witness, not one word I now write is dictated.

"I cannot, I will not deny I have loved——passionately loved—one to whom my heart was given long before I ever met with you. You know how we were separated. On my honour, when I proposed to unite my fate with yours, I believed I had overcome this weakness;—I thought at least that what still remained had been tutored into friendship. I would not now seem to reproach you, Augusta, but had you at first shown more indulgence for feelings which you must have seen me endeavouring to conquer, all would have been well.

"We were again thrown together!—I found her neglected, injured, friendless, and exposed to every danger. Again, had you confided in me, had you held out to her the hand of kindness, Theresa herself would have been a link between us, as I should in gratitude have taken to my heart her who nobly sheltered the ill-fated being to whom I was bound by so many ties. I know well what your suspicions were—I know that not only you doubted her virtue, but my own fidelity; it was that affronting injustice on your part which rudely tore asunder the last link of sympathy between us. I take God to witness, that the vow by which I bound myself to you at the altar

Digitized by Google

ever remained unbroken—that, tenderly as I loved her, no thought—no wish, contrary to my duty to you as my wife—to her as the wife of another, ever crossed my mind. I loved her—I still love her—I shall love her to my dying day; but there was room enough in my heart for every feeling of kindness and affection for another, for one whom I esteemed, honoured, aye, and whom I loved—for I had looked to her as the friend and solace of my remaining days, until she cast me from her by her injustice.

"I have now done, Augusta; if this confession of mine pains and offends you, pray forgive me, I could not bid you farewell without making it. Once more I propose a mutual forgiveness of the past, let not the remembrance of one now mouldering in the grave separate any longer those who are still bound to each other by the sacred, the endearing tie of children—for their sake now at last trust and believe me. God alone knows whether I shall ever again see them or you; if I do not, let me think you will not teach them to injure their father's memory, and that you will, when I am gone, think of me as of one conscious of many errors—many faults towards all his fellow creatures, but who never wronged *you* as you imagined, and who can with truth affirm, that he does not now retain one feeling of anger or discontent, but would at this moment gladly—fondly welcome you to his heart as his *best*, his now *only*, friend.

"It is past four—in less than an hour I shall leave this our home, perhaps for ever. May the blessing of Heaven rest upon it! Bestow on my dear boy all that kindness which I have no doubt you will now feel for his absent father, and together talk of him who will often think of you.

"God bless you, Augusta; once more remember we part friends. If we again meet, may I be enabled to act up to the resolutions and feelings which now in sincerity fill my heart, and which I feel sure will be shared by you as soon as you have read my letter.

"Farewell, farewell,

"LAUNCESTON."

Digitized by Google

Had Trevelyan received Augusta's reply to this appeal to her feelings while his heart still glowed with the sentiments which it expressed, and by which it had been dictated, it would in all probability have chilled and disappointed him. But when her letter reached him he was surrounded and occupied by objects of very different interest, the feelings of his own affectionate heart, which had been so much roused by the circumstances attending his departure from home, had naturally calmed, and as she expressed herself with more of indulgence with regard to Theresa, and of kindness towards himself than she had ever yet done, and, in truth, with as much of warmth as her cold nature permitted, he reasoned himself into being content.

All was now ready for Lord Launceston's departure from Trevelyan Castle. He collected together a few books, among which was his sister's bible, and placing them with his writing-box apart on a table, he left the drawing-room and slowly stole up stairs.

St. Ives slept alone, in a small room adjoining that occupied by the nurses and the other two children; he softly opened the door of this apartment, and closing that which led into the next, he approached the bed where his child lay in all the freshness of repose and happy innocence. He knelt down by him and prayed long and fervently.

The clock struck five—he rose hastily from his knees to depart, but could not resist the temptation of imprinting one last kiss on St. Ives' little glowing face. His caress awoke the boy, who, instantly recognising his father, and who had possibly been dreaming of all his gambols of the evening before, smiling playfully in his face directly exclaimed, "What, is papa come to have another game of romps with St. Ives?"

"No, dear boy," said Trevelyan in a low voice, and making sign to him not to disturb his companions in the next room, "I am come to bid you——" he paused, and then in a tremulous voice added, "good night."

"Good night,! are you going to bed? St. Ives will say his prayers for papa," and joining his little hands

Digitized by Google

together—" Pray God bless dear papa, and make me a good boy."

" Amen!" fervently ejaculated Trevelyan, as he hid his agitated face on his child's pillow.

" Will papa let me go out with him to-morrow, if I good? and me will be so very very good."

" Promise papa you will try for his sake to be always good," said Trevelyan with earnestness, as he placed his child's arms round his neck, " and may the God of Heaven protect and bless you."

He could say no more, and drawing down the curtains, hastily left the bedside. He paused a moment at the door, and then recollecting that he had not re-opened the one which led into the nursery, he again returned for that purpose. As he passed St. Ives' little bed he once more stopped to look at him. The happy, unconscious child, a smile still lingering on his lips, had already sunk into the light slumbers of infancy! With a bursting heart Trevelyan tore himself from the bed, and finally left the room.

It was a dismal cold November morning, daylight had not yet broken, and the deserted stillness of the house struck painfully on Trevelyan's heart. In his way down stairs, he had to pass through the gallery containing the family portraits. A strange undefinable feeling of awe made him unconsciously so hasten his steps along the gloomy apartment, that the current of air which blew chilly through it had nearly extinguished his light, and he was obliged for a minute to stop, lest he should be left in total darkness. As the restored flame burnt up, its glare fell full on the armour of his warlike ancestor, and on Vandyke's portrait of " The Lady Howard!"

Again the name and the likeness struck forcibly on Trevelyan's imagination! The whole of his past life was in an instant conjured up to his memory; each moment marked by any peculiar joy or sorrow, again appearing with nearly all its original strength of colouring. And so painfully did the retrospect contrast with the solitude of his present existence, that he felt himself as if in some strange mysterious connexion with the

Digitized by Google

denizens of the land of spirits by which he was then surrounded.

Trevelyan continued to gaze intently at the picture, until he fancied the eyes were turned on him with a mournful expression of pity, and that the lips moved in a murmured farewell. Agitated, bewildered, yet ashamed of the almost childish superstitious horror which had now taken possession of his senses, he hastily left the spot, though not without more than once fearfully looking back, startled by the echo of his own footsteps, as they rang through the empty apartments. When he reached the entrance hall, he saw by the twinkling lights in the attendants' hands, and the carriage lamps outside, that the horses were already harnessed, and every thing prepared for his departure; a cold shiver crept over his frame, he dared not trust himself to look on a *single* object—but waiving a farewell to the servants who were assembled to take leave of him, he darted forward, and hastily sprang into the carriage.

Not a word was uttered; the door was closed, and he was just driving off, when turning back to take one more look of his home, he observed poor little Oscar standing on the flight of steps before the house, mournfully watching the departing carriage. Trevelyan immediately stopped the drivers, and calling to Griffiths,—"Remember," said he, "that dog is taken every possible care of."

"No fear, my Lord," replied the steward, "he is a great favourite with us all below, and as my Lady does not much like to see him about the house, I feed and look after him myself."

Trevelyan made sign he was content, and that the carriage was to proceed. "God bless you, my Lord, and send you back safe!" ejaculated Griffiths, now at last venturing, when apart from the rest, to speak to his master; "I am sure we shall all pray for your health and return."

"Thank you—farewell!" murmured Trevelyan, and he sank back into the carriage.

It drove rapidly on, and soon the park, the lodge, the village were all passed; perhaps when feeling himself

Digitized by Google

thus an outcast from all the endearments of life, he in the depression of the moment, half repented the step which he had taken. But such thoughts now came too late—he had gone too far to recede.—The die was cast.

It is not the intention of the compiler of these memoirs to enter into any of the military details of that memorable campaign, with which all are so well acquainted, and from the recollection of which the mind of every Englishman must still turn with pain and humiliation. Towards the end of November 1808, Trevelyan joined his gallant friend Sir John Moore at Salamanca, and once again, amid the excitement of a military life, he to a degree recovered that health of mind which he sought. But life was now, he felt, gone by with him, every illusion was destroyed, every hope blighted, and it was only when forgetting himself, and thinking of his children, that he could still look upon it with feelings of even transient interest.

How little had either Trevelyan or others anticipated the melancholy termination to the fatal campaign in which he was now engaged! How little had the warm-hearted Sir Henry Williams, when so strongly urging him to the scheme, or his friend Moore, when so kindly accepting his volunteer services, contemplated the horrors to which he would be exposed! And they were horrors peculiarly calculated to sicken a heart overflowing with so much of the milk of human kindness as Trevelyan's, and now no longer steeled, as it once had been, by those ardent chivalrous feelings which carry men through the dreadful details of war.—Glory was a word which had ceased to vibrate on his ear, for no responsive heart now echoed back the triumphant sound, and it could therefore no longer deafen him to the cries of human suffering.

But he was not one to desert a friend in the hour of adversity; and besides, he had scarcely now a choice as to his own conduct. Sir John Moore, with his ill-fated army, was making all possible speed towards the coast, and even if Trevelyan had abandoned him, it could only have been to pursue the same route, and for the same object.

Digitized by Google

Not long after Trevelyan had joined head-quarters he made acquaintance with a Colonel Lindsay, whom he soon discovered to be the husband of Theresa's pernicious friend. He too had experienced disappointment in his married life, but such sorrows had sat light on the gay heart of the soldier, and in the duties and distractions of his profession he soon learned to jest at domestic evils. Such a careless being seemed little suited to one of Trevelyan's turn of mind, little likely to inspire him with interest; but he knew that Lindsay's quick dark eye had often rested on Theresa's beloved countenance—that his ears had often heard the tones of her bewitching voice; and although her name could never pass his own lips, yet a momentary start, which he sometimes mistook for pleasure, roused his deadened heart when it was accidentally pronounced by his companion.

Colonel Lindsay, on his part, felt himself immediately and irresistibly attracted towards the melancholy volunteer, and often during their long and painful marches he sought his society in preference to that of his more lively and apparently more congenial companions. Trevelyan then sometimes for a moment caught the contagion of Lindsay's gayer spirit, but oftener the scenes by which they were now surrounded, and which struck so painfully on Trevelyan's mind, awed into seriousness even that of his thoughtless friend.

For the sights and sounds of distress accumulated each day around them. Pursued by a merciless enemy, and amid all the miseries which cold, hunger, and fatigue can inflict, Trevelyan and his ill-fated companions were hurried over heights covered with snow, and through ravines choked up with broken ammunition and the dead bodies of man and beast, until they at length, on the 11th of January, reached Corunna. It was not before the 14th that the transports, which from a total ignorance of the country had been mis-sent to Vigo, hove in sight. There was no time now to be lost; and preparations for embarkation were immediately made, the General charging Trevelyan with orders to the naval officers appointed to superintend these arrangements, and laying strict injunc-

Digitized by Google

tions on himself to go on board that very night. For his health had of late greatly suffered from all he had undergone, and his anxious-minded friend had more than once expressed his solicitude that he should be rescued from the sufferings and dangers of a warfare, from which he seemed so little likely to derive any glory.

"Remember, therefore," added the General, after having explained his intentions relative to the dispositions of the army, "that I have your solemn promise to leave these shores to-night; and now not to lose more time with these details, ride with me to the outposts, as I can tell you by the way how I think the embarkation of the sick and wounded had best be effected."

Trevelyan mounted his horse, and attended his gallant friend to the heights on which the troops were posted. It was soon evident, by the movement in the enemy's ranks, that they were getting under arms, and before long a heavy cannonade commenced.

Sir David Baird's division was placed on the left, and Sir John Moore immediately despatched Colonel Lindsay to him with some orders relative to the attack which he anticipated. He had scarcely been gone, when a seeming change of intention on the part of the enemy made him determine on altering his own plans, and calling to Trevelyan, "Launceston!" said he, "you shall do me one more service before I send you—thank God—safe home to your country and family; your horse seems fresh, try and overtake Lindsay, and charge him to give this to Sir David;" and he wrote with his pencil a few words on a torn piece of paper.

Trevelyan immediately putting spurs to his horse, galloped off, and reached Sir David Baird nearly at the same moment with Lindsay. He delivered his message, and the two friends then again turned their horses towards head-quarters. "I embark to-night," said Trevelyan, "so we may not meet till in England.—Farewell!—God bless you"—and he held out his hand to Colonel Lindsay.

"You see," said the latter gaily, "how wrong you were, and how right I was, when I laughed at all your

Digitized by Google

presentiments of evil. Heaven knows we have lost enough of our brave companions, but you at least will now survive to tell the tale, and be yourself the bearer of a certain mysterious locket, which I was with such solemnity to deliver to your son."

As he uttered these words, the light-hearted soldier looked gaily in Trevelyan's face, but he found no corresponding smile in his abstracted countenance, and the next minute a random shot whizzing past within a few yards of their horses' heads, they both involuntarily checked their speed. "By the Lord Harry, that was touch and go," said Lindsay; "I think we had better make all the speed we can to our post, as we seem to be here in a perilous situation, but my poor jaded beast is so soon worn out, that my spurs have no longer any effect. As yours seems to have still some life remaining in him, do you hurry to the General, and tell him that Sir David perfectly comprehends, and will attend to his orders.

Trevelyan dashed on—in a minute, another ball came with surer mark than the first, for Lindsay saw him immediately stagger and fall from his horse. He rushed up to him, and raised him from the ground; a grape-shot had entered his breast, and he was already speechless. He however recognised his friend—he grasped his hand—his lips moved—but in vain, he could not articulate a word, and after a momentary struggle for breath, he expired without a groan.

Colonel Lindsay called to some soldiers at a little distance to remove his body to the place where they had bivouacked the preceding night; then mounting Trevelyan's horse, who untouched had remained standing by his fallen master, he hastened to deliver his message to the General, informing him at the same time of the death of Lord Launceston. He then returned with all possible speed to attend to the remains of his friend; and when he again reached the spot, found that the soldiers had just completed the melancholy preparations for interment, while Trevelyan's lifeless body, wrapped in his cloak, lay on the blood-stained ground.

Lindsay raised his head, and assisted by the men, was

Digitized by Google

about to lay him in his cold bed, when he suddenly recollected his often-repeated request respecting the mysterious trinket, and hastily unfolding the cloak, while even his stout heart turned sick at the sight of the lacerated bosom, he removed from Trevelyan's neck the black ribbon again clotted with his blood.

There was no time for form or prayer—the enemy themselves paid him the last funeral honours of a soldier, as their shot came quick and loud over his grave. To hasten the work of burial, Colonel Lindsay with his sword assisted in throwing in the earth. It was not without a shudder that he saw the pale features of his brave companion gradually disappear beneath the crumbling mould, and his warm blood curdled when, having completed his melancholy task, and taking a last look of the spot before quitting it for ever, he fancied he could trace in the raised mound, the outlined form of his friend.

To sights like these the soldier's heart becomes hardened; but often in after scenes of peace, they revisit the mind with sensations of horror unfelt at the time. And so it was with Colonel Lindsay:—as soon as he had performed the last duties of friendship, he again carelessly joined the din of war, and unmoved, saw many a brave companion fall at his side; but when, nine years afterwards, he, in compliance with Lord Launceston's injunction, sought his son, and traced in his handsome fresh young face those same features which he had himself helped to mingle with the dust, that former scene of blood and death returned so forcibly and painfully to his imagination, that for a minute he could scarcely explain his errand.

At the sight of the ribbon, discoloured with blood, and which the boy directly guessed to have flowed from his father's heart, his cheek turned pale, and he held the locket for some time in his hand, awe-struck and unable to speak. "Did not my father explain the meaning of the cypher?" he said at last; "it is, I see, a double TT; but that tells me nothing; my mother's name is Augusta, and I therefore know of no one to whom this hair can

Digitized by Google

have belonged, unless, indeed, to a sister of my father's, whom I remember, when children, we all called Treevy."

"I can give you no further information," replied Colonel Lindsay; "indeed I never thought of asking for any, concluding that what was evidently of so much value to Lord Launceston, could be no novelty to his family. He frequently charged me to take care of this locket should I survive him, and he seemed from the first impressed with the idea that he should never return home; but all he said respecting it was, that you were to wear it for his sake, and that I was not to deliver it to you until you was sixteen."

This sacred relic was duly appreciated by young St. Ives, now Lord Launceston, who, although a mere child when he lost his father, had ever retained for him a most romantic feeling, so much so, as to be prompted by it (although very much against his mother's wishes) to follow his footsteps by entering the army. At the time of Colonel Lindsay's first acquaintance with young Launceston, he had just obtained his commission, and full of warlike ardour, he eagerly listened to the details of his father's military life, determining to emulate his example. But the pacific state of Europe, since that time, has allowed of no such self-devotion in defence of his country; and his nearly nominal profession now only acts as a mysterious link between him and one whose memory he almost worships.

Lady Launceston is still alive, and little changed in any respect by the additional years which have passed over her. She was much shocked on first hearing of her husband's death, but her grief seemed gradually to wear away with her weeds; and in the enjoyment of undisputed power and consequence, she is possibly now a happier woman as a widow, than she ever was as a wife. She lives almost entirely at Trevelyan Castle, her son having in a great measure resigned to her the charge of the estate, as, from his different pursuits, he has hitherto had little opportunity of residing there himself.

Digitized by Google

POSTSCRIPT BY THE EDITOR.

These memoirs of the Launceston family began at Richmond, and at Richmond they shall end.

Many changes have there taken place since the days when Trevelyan, in the first raptures of an engrossing passion, rowed Theresa Howard on the placid waters of the Thames.

Miss Trevelyan's house has had many a tenant, and undergone many an alteration. Her next-door neighbour, the relict of Lord Ladbrook's first cousin, is still alive, but has changed her residence, in apprehension of damp from the river. She is now what is called "*a wonderful old woman;*" that is to say, she is at near ninety as much interested in the concerns of this life as if there were no other to look to; as busy about her neighbours' affairs, as keen at cards, and as sharp in all matters of self-interest. On a fine day she is still to be seen in her Bath chair, going the round of her numerous friends on the green and the hill, the regular conveyer and retailer of all the tittle-tattle and scandal of Richmond and its vicinity. Her memory, however, is of late much impaired, although her happy consciousness of superior information with regard to the private concerns of all around her, remains in full force, and produces occasionally strange blunders in her stories. If, for instance, her former neighbour, Miss Trevelyan, is ever named, she regularly asserts that she had a large family of children, on which account she, and all the respectable part of the community, had refused to visit her. She maintains that Lady Herbert Leslie was, to her certain knowledge, a natural daughter of Lord Launceston's, a mulatto, and a woman of the worst possible character besides; having been mistress to all Buonaparte's generals in France, and then ended her career by running off with Sir Henry Williams from Twickenham, in consequence of which poor Lady Williams had died of a broken heart. Lord Launceston, she adds, was the only one of the family with whom she (Mrs. Hopkins) had ever condes-

Digitized by Google

cended to be acquainted, as he was a very gentlemanly man, and an excellent whist-player.

It is now some years since the editor of these pages visited the scene of the events they relate. A particularly romantic mood, and a beautiful summer's evening conspired to suggest the pilgrimage, and its first object was naturally Theresa's grave. A simple stone, bearing her initials, and a date, alone records her former existence. The tall rank grass waves over the mound where so much loveliness now lies mouldering in decay, and few either know or care who sleeps below.

Long and sad was the train of thought awakened by this neglected tomb, and had it not been forcibly broken in upon by a troop of noisy children passing through the church-yard on their return from school, the mournful contemplation would not even then have terminated.

The next point of attraction was Miss Trevelyan's former home. During the walk thither along the bank of the river, every object, and every sound, appeared so unchanged by the lapse of years—the pleasure-boats still gaily skimming over the surface of the waters—the Twickenham bells ringing their wonted merry peal, that imagination conjured up almost visibly the forms of Trevelyan and Theresa, and the tones of her guitar accompanying the Venetian Barcarola, seemed to vibrate on the ear.

But this pleasing illusion was soon rapidly dispelled, for, on looking over the low parapet-wall into Miss Trevelyan's garden, no Catalpa tree met the view, and the bench on which she used to spend so many an hour was gone!——

How painful it is thus to trace the gradual disappearance of every, even inanimate, object connected with by-gone days; to have the sad conviction forced upon us that

> Our joyous hours are passed away,
> And many a heart which then was gay,
> Within the tomb now darkly dwells,
> And hears no more those evening bells!

THE END.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

This book should be returned to the Library on or before the last date stamped below.

A fine of five cents a day is incurred by retaining it beyond the specified time.

Please return promptly.

Digitized by Google

22462.38

HARVARD COLLEGE
LIBRARY

GIFT OF THE

PORCELLIAN CLUB

1917

Digitized by Google

22462.38
Trevelyan /
Widener Library
003598964
3 2044 086 836 756

Digitized by Google